A Lens of Marginalisation

Pacific Learners in Aotearoa/New Zealand and their Understanding of History

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Abstract

The histories of the Pacific and its people are populated with stories of agency and resistance. In contrast, the narratives that persist in New Zealand regarding Pacific learners are dominated by a focus on deficit and underachievement. Notwithstanding their growing presence in New Zealand's schools, Pacific learners have been, and continue to be, underserved by an education system that disempowers them in the classroom and struggles to provide equitable outcomes. However, despite the persistent failings of New Zealand's education system, subject specific research which explores how to empower Pacific learners in New Zealand's secondary school classrooms is thin on the ground.

This thesis uses student understanding of history as constructed and contested as a vehicle to investigate the interpretative frameworks of predominantly Pacific learners at a low decile, Catholic girl's high school in South Auckland. Underpinned by a critical theory framework, it explores the way the participants' understanding of power shapes their engagement with history in the classroom. Using qualitative and culturally responsive methodologies, data was obtained from over 70 participants through both in-class activities and talanoa. Comparative analysis was used to identify three key themes. First, that the participants believe that valid historical narratives must include multiple or marginalised perspectives. Second, that participants can clearly articulate the power relations that structure both the history they study and teaching and learning that takes place in the classroom. This includes clearly identifying and critiquing the dominance of Western ways of knowing in the enacted history curriculum. Third, that the participants engage with historical content in complex and nuanced ways, often finding relevance in those histories that draw on a social justice focus.

An original conceptual model, underpinned by critical pedagogy and resistance theory, offers a new way to explain the findings. It argues that the participants filter history through a 'lens of marginalisation', shaped by their sociocultural background, which leads participants to undertake acts of resistance in the classroom. This thesis concludes by arguing that the discipline of history has the potential to be emancipatory, providing the opportunity for Pacific learners to reveal marginalised narratives and underlying power structures in the classroom. Finally, this thesis makes key recommendations for policy and practice related to the teaching and learning of history for marginalised learners in New Zealand which will have implications for a broader social justice agenda.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to the students, past, present and future, of McAuley High School.

Acknowledgments

I would like to first and foremost acknowledge and thank the students of McAuley High School who participated in this research. In doing so, they gifted me a precious taonga for which I am truly grateful. I would also like to express my thanks to both the McAuley High School Board of Trustees and Anne Miles for their continued support throughout the research, including supporting my successful application for a year-long Teach NZ scholarship to assist in the writing of this thesis.

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Glossary

This section defines the key terminology used in this study.

Achieved with Merit or Excellence

Students can obtain three grades when completing the National Certificate of Educational Achievement: Achieved, Achieved with Merit and Achieved with Excellence. Achieved with Merit or Excellence indicates the quality of the work submitted by the student, with Excellence being the highest grade awarded in the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) in New Zealand.

Aotearoa

Aotearoa is the Māori (indigenous) name for New Zealand. Aotearoa literally translates to ‘land of the long white cloud’.

Decile system

The decile system is used by the New Zealand government to calculate the level of funding a state or state-integrated school requires. The decile system is based on census data which is used to measure the socio-economic position of the school’s student community. Schools are then rated from decile 1 to 10. The lower the school’s decile rating the higher the funding it receives. Decile rating is not an indication of the quality of the school.

Education Review Office (ERO)

The Education Review Office is a government department with the responsibility of reviewing and publicly reporting on the quality of care and education in all New Zealand schools and early childhood services.

External assessment

External assessments in the National Certificate of Educational Achievement are largely undertaken as examinations at the end of the year. These examinations are marked by panels of markers from around New Zealand.

Internal assessment

Internal assessment assesses knowledge and skills of a student which cannot be easily assessed in an examination. Internal assessment generally takes place during class time and can often be worked on at home by the students. The teacher generally assesses and grades the work submitted by students during internal assessment.

Māori

Māori refers to the indigenous people of Aotearoa/New Zealand.

National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA)

The National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) is the main qualification for secondary students in New Zealand. Students are assessed against a range of standards which measure their understanding of particular skills or knowledge using both internal and external assessment. When students achieve in a standard, they gain a number of credits. Students must achieve a specific number of credits to gain an NCEA certificate.

New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA)

The New Zealand Qualifications Authority manages the New Zealand Qualifications Framework and ensures the robustness of the secondary school assessment system.

Pasifika Education Plan 2013 - 2017

The Pasifika Education Plan 2013 – 2017 sets out the strategic direction of the National-led government for raising the educational outcomes of Pasifika learners. The Ministry of Education is currently working with Pacific communities to design a new Pacific Education Plan.

Pākehā

Pākehā is a Māori-language term for non-Māori New Zealanders, primarily of European descent.

Palagi

A Samoan-language term for a white or non-Samoan person

Priority learners

Priority learners are groups of students who have been identified as historically not experiencing success in the New Zealand schooling system. These include many Māori and Pacific learners, those from low socio-economic backgrounds, and students with special education needs.

Scholarship history

New Zealand Scholarship assessments provide the opportunity for highly achieving students to apply their subject specific knowledge and be assessed against demanding standards. Students who achieve in New Zealand Scholarship assessments are provided with both recognition and monetary reward.

State integrated schools

A state integrated school operates within the state school network but retain a ‘special character’ protected by law. Its land and buildings are privately owned and governed by a proprietor. McAuley High School is a state integrated school with a Catholic special character.

Talanoa

Talanoa is a Pacific style conversation or sharing of ideas. It can be both formal and informal. For further explanation please see an discussion of the methodology in Chapter Five.

Tapasā

Tapasā is a cultural competencies framework for teachers of Pacific learners. *Tapasā* is evidence based and offers contextualised planning and teaching strategies along with a Pacific lens on the Standards for the Teaching Profession and the Code of Professional Responsibility

Year 12 students

Year 12 is an educational year group in New Zealand secondary schools. Students in Year 12 are generally aged from 15.5 - 17 years old and are in their twelfth year of compulsory education. Students in Year 12 are usually studying for NCEA Level 2.

Year 13 students

Year 13 is an educational year group in New Zealand secondary schools. Students in Year 13 are generally aged from 16.5 - 18 years old and are in their final year of secondary school. Year 13 is not compulsory. Students in Year 13 are usually studying for NCEA Level 3. Some will also undertake New Zealand Scholarship assessments.

Chapter One: Introduction

On the 16th of June 1971, the Polynesian Panther movement emerged from the now gentrified Auckland suburbs of Ponsonby and Grey Lynn. The movement was a response to the endemic racism experienced by Pacific Islanders at the hands of both the New Zealand government and wider society. The goal of the Polynesian Panthers, much like their American counterparts the Black Panthers, was to emancipate their people from a system of oppression. This desire was articulated by Polynesian Panther, Wayne Toleafoa who stated that:

> To many young Polynesians like myself, the only way forward for us as a migrant people was "self help". We would have to stand up for ourselves and our people, and not wait for others to do it for us. (Anae, Burgoyne & Iuli 2006, p.61)

The same agency and determination exhibited by the members of the Polynesian Panthers was also demonstrated by the members of the Samoan independence movement – the Mau – which underwent a resurgence following New Zealand's occupation of Samoa in 1918. Like the Panthers over 50 years later, the Mau, also fought to empower their people and liberate them from a paternalistic and incompetent New Zealand Administration. Through non-violent resistance, the members of the Mau advanced a Samoan nationalist movement that became a force to be reckoned with. "Samoa mo Samoa" (Samoa for Samoans) was their call to action. The call was eventually realised when Samoa achieved independence from New Zealand in 1962.

The histories of the Pacific Islands and their people are filled with narratives of resistance, empowerment and agency. They are the histories that, as a history teacher of predominantly Pacific learners, I chose to teach. However, these histories of resistance, and the agency exhibited by the many Pacific actors that populate them, is rarely afforded to Pacific peoples, and in particular Pacific learners, in the New Zealand context. Instead the narratives of Pacific learners in New Zealand centre around tales of underachievement and deficit. New Zealand's education system, while generally described as high performing, has long been characterised by a persistent "tail of underachievement" which disproportionately impacts Māori and Pacific learners. The relationship between this tail of underachievement and ethnic and cultural identity, is explained succinctly by Ell and Grudnoff (2013) who argue that:

> OECD figures that reveal New Zealand's achievement gap between the highest and the lowest achievers show that Māori students and Pacific Island students are over-

> represented in the lower achieving group, while Pakeha and Asian students are over-represented in the higher achieving groups (OECD, 2011). Thus culture, ethnicity and poverty have become implicated in problems of persistent underachievement, as defined by international test results. (p.75)

As a result of this underachievement, Pacific learners are consistently funneled into academic pathways that limit their future options and reveal the low expectations for Pacific learners that pervade our education system (Salesa, 2018).

The story of the participants in this study is not one that aligns with the deficit narrative we have become all too familiar with in our newsfeeds. The participants in this study all attended McAuley High School in Ōtāhuhu, South Auckland. The most recent Education Review Office (ERO) report of McAuley High School notes that 88 percent of the students attending McAuley High School are of Pacific descent and that "student achievement in National Certificates of Educational Achievement (NCEA) is well above other secondary schools with a similar student profile and exceeds national averages in Levels 1, 2 and 3" (Bailey, 2015). The ERO report identifies the school as "effective in promoting Pacific students' educational success" and describes McAuley High School as "a high performing school, providing high quality education for students" (Bailey, 2015). The now retired principal of McAuley High School, Anne Miles, attributes the success of the school to culturally sustaining teacher practice which emphasises the dignity of the students and focuses on differentiated teaching and learning underpinned by high expectations:

> We are proudly a decile one school in South Auckland with a roll of 800 predominantly Māori and Pasifika students. As a multicultural school, where our cultural identities are acknowledged and celebrated, our students know where they come from and have developed clear goals and expectations of themselves. (Miles, 2017, para 2)

The successes of the students at McAuley High School contradict the narrative of an inevitable tail of underachievement which disproportionately impacts Māori and Pacific learners in New Zealand. My interest in pursuing this research topic was borne out of my positive experiences as a classroom teacher at McAuley High School. I began my journey as a teacher at the age of 27, after I had tried my hand at a number of different jobs such as working as an Executive Secretary to a Member of Parliament, then a tour guide at the Navy Museum and as an Account Coordinator at an advertising firm. By the time I qualified as a teacher I was ready to dive headfirst into my new profession and was lucky enough to secure a position teaching history at McAuley High School straight out of training college. I

began my journey as a teacher in a school with a strong Catholic character and student body of predominantly Pacific learners from some of the lowest socioeconomic areas in Auckland.

In that first year of teaching history, I taught a unit on the Samoan independence movement – the Mau – to my Year 12 history class. I found my first experience of teaching Pacific history to Pacific learners to be transformative as a teacher. I was put in the unfamiliar position of my students often having more knowledge on the subject than me, particularly where Samoan language, geography and familial relationships were concerned. I watched my students engage with historical narratives they felt personally connected to as they brought in artefacts and stories from their homes to share with me. I saw student engagement translate into academic success as I taught them to effectively examine and communicate the histories they were engaging with in class. At the same time, my close colleague in the history department at McAuley introduced a unit on the development of the Polynesian Panther movement in 1970s Auckland to our NCEA Level 1 history course. The addition of this unit widened the opportunities of our students to engage with Pacific histories. The success my colleague and I realised in raising the achievement of our students at all levels of the history programme from 2010 onwards, increased the popularity of the subject among the students. Those students not only enjoyed the topics that related to Pacific history but also engaged with, and achieved highly in, a range of history units that spanned diverse time periods and locations. As my students continued to experience success in their study of history, and as I continued develop my knowledge of my students and how to best teach them, I became increasingly aware of my own cultural lens and worldview and how, at times, this differed to those of my students. I was often challenged by the ways in which my students saw the world around them: the histories that they excitedly engaged with, the histories that they did not engage with at all, and the different ways they interpreted the actions of historical actors we discussed in class. These little insights into the ways my students engaged with history prompted me to consider how cultural and socioeconomic factors may have shaped their interpretative frameworks and the implications this might have for my teaching of them.

My experience of teaching history at McAuley High School has shown me how empowering the discipline can be for Pacific learners, while also providing them with success in a university approved subject that opens pathways for the future. However, when it comes to history education in the New Zealand context, we have little understanding of the ways in which our Pacific learners engage with and make sense of history, and consequently we lack an understanding of the most effective ways to teach them. It is estimated that by 2050 the number of Pacific learners in New Zealand will have increased from 10 to 20 per cent of the total school population (Ministry of Education, 2018). Given the increasing number of Pacific

learners in our classrooms, and their historic underachievement, it is essential that research is undertaken which informs how educators can respond to and empower Pacific learners in history classrooms. Current research into history education recognises that sociocultural factors such as identity are significant in shaping the ways in which students engage with and understand historical knowledge (Barton, 2005; Epstein & Peck, 2017; Levstik, 2008b). This research adds to an existing body of knowledge which explores the relationship between identity and the understanding of history, by examining the ways in which the participants understand history as constructed and contested. In doing so, it will explore the interpretive framework of the participants and provide an insight into the role that identity plays in their understanding of history. I will use critical pedagogy and resistance theory as theoretical frameworks for making sense of the insights the research offers regarding the participants interpretive frameworks and their responses to the history they encounter in the classroom. This research was undertaken and completed while I was a practitioner in the classroom. I will argue that the findings of this research will have implications for the effective and empowering education of Pacific learners, and other marginalised students in New Zealand's history classrooms. My hope is that this thesis finds resonance among my fellow practitioners and with researchers interested in the intersection of history education and social justice issues in education. It will also be of interest to policy makers working in the field of designing educational policy for marginalised learners.

Research questions

The research takes place in a specific case study, among female, predominantly Pacific, learners at a decile one Catholic high school in South Auckland, New Zealand. I set out to explore the interpretative framework of the participants through an examination of their understanding of history as constructed and contested.

The following questions guided the research project:

- In what ways do the participants engage with historical narratives and contested histories?
- What role does the participants' sociocultural context play in their understanding of history as constructed and contested?
- What influences the teaching and learning of history in New Zealand classrooms?

Thesis outline

This thesis will address the questions outlined above in the following nine chapters.

Chapter two contextualises history education in New Zealand. It evaluates the differing approaches to teaching, learning and researching history, and examines the development of history education in New Zealand through a Southern theory lens. It discusses the traditional Eurocentric underpinnings of New Zealand's history curriculum and considers the extent to which the 'metropole' continues to dominate current debates concerning history education in New Zealand.

Chapter three canvasses the extant literature which investigates how students make sense of history, focusing on those studies that employ a sociocultural approach. It outlines the ways in which identity influences student understanding of history and the impact of national narratives on the interpretative frameworks of students. In particular, the chapter explores the impact racial identities have on student engagement and understanding of history in both international and national contexts. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the limited research that exists regarding Pacific learners in New Zealand and their understanding of history.

Chapter four provides an overview of the theoretical framework which underpins the study. It outlines the social constructionist beginnings of the research project and the decision to employ critical pedagogy and resistance theory as an explanatory framework to discuss the findings of the research project.

Chapter five outlines the ways in which the theoretical framework detailed in chapter four guides the methodological choices of the study. It argues for a qualitative case study approach and details the methods used to gather data throughout the project. This chapter also provides a justification for the culturally responsive methodologies used in the study and explains how those methodologies align with the critical theory underpinnings of the research.

Chapter six, seven and eight present the findings of the research and are divided among three key themes. **Chapter six** details the ways in which the participants engage with the concept of bias. It finds that the participants' understanding of bias underpins the ways in which they engage with contested histories and the historical judgements they make. **Chapter seven** explores the participants' understanding of power in historical and classroom contexts, arguing that participants articulate power as a struggle between dominant and marginalised people and groups. **Chapter eight** discusses the different ways the participants identify with the historical contexts encountered during their study. I argue that the participants identify with history in a range of nuanced ways, including drawing on their own sociocultural knowledge to make connections with the history they study.

Chapter nine employs critical pedagogy and resistance theory to make sense of the research findings and examine both the interpretive framework of the participants and the ways in which they respond to historical knowledge and pedagogical power in the classroom. I argue that the participants filter historical knowledge through a lens of marginalisation which, when coupled with the disciplinary skills of history, results in the students making agentic choices in the classroom. These choices manifest themselves as both acts of compliance with the teacher and "quietly subversive" acts of resistance. This chapter argues these acts of resistance were facilitated by a critical pedagogy approach employed by the teacher/researcher which allows for "pockets of resistance" to occur in the classroom.

Chapter ten concludes the thesis by outlining three key findings that arose from the study. The chapter introduces a conceptual model which brings together the findings of the thesis and acts as a tool for teachers seeking to understand the choices their marginalised students make in the classroom. Next, the chapter explores the implications of these findings for the effective teaching and learning of Pacific learners, arguing for a critical pedagogy approach to the teaching of history in order to facilitate 'pockets of resistance' in the classroom. A second recommendation implores teachers to reflect on their own interpretive frameworks in order to de-centre Western approaches to teaching and framing history which marginalise Pacific learners. Finally, the chapter recommends further research be undertaken to explore how the identity of Pacific learners shapes their engagement with New Zealand and Māori history so that these learners can be effectively engaged in the new compulsory New Zealand history curriculum.

Chapter Two: Contextualising History Education in New Zealand

Introduction

The literature review on this topic will be presented in two chapters. This first chapter focuses on different approaches to teaching and learning history in both national and international contexts. It begins by outlining a disciplinary approach to history education and its dominance in the teaching and learning of history in the New Zealand context. This discussion is followed by a critique of the disciplinary approach, and a discussion of alternative approaches to history education which draw on sociocultural frameworks in order to understand historical thinking. After exploring these different pedagogical approaches to history education in both the New Zealand and international context, a Southern theory lens (Connell, 2014) is applied to the development of history education in New Zealand. This chapter concludes by considering the issues that face teaching and learning of history in New Zealand today, in particular the positioning of knowledge in the curriculum in light of Southern theory and a critical sociocultural approach to history education.

A disciplinary approach to history education

A disciplinary approach to the teaching and learning of history has been traditionally employed extensively both nationally and internationally in the field of history education research (Clark, 2008; Morton & Seixas, 2013; Taylor & Young, 2003; Wineburg, 2001). This approach focuses on examining the cognitive abilities of young people, with the goal of teaching students to 'think historically'. It charts student progression from "naïve understandings of historical accounts as true or singular representations of "what happened" in the past to their abilities to reconceptualize accounts as interpretations or reconstructions of the past based on evidence and rational thought" (Epstein & Peck, 2017, p. 2).

Research into how students make sense of history as constructed and/or contested has been explored within a disciplinary framework as part of an effort to develop the historical literacy of students and to get them 'thinking historically'. Taylor and Young (2003) include an understanding of the contested nature of history as part of their matrix of historical literacy for use in the Australian school system. They define "Contention and Contestability" as "understanding the 'rules' and the place of public and professional historical debate" (Taylor & Young, 2003, p. 33). New Zealand's history curriculum mirrors Taylor and Young's (2003) focus on developing historical literacy by also concentrating on the development of skills that

will encourage students “to question accepted interpretations of the past and to consider contesting theories of historians and commentators” (Ministry of Education, 2010, p.2). A focus on the contestability of history is most explicitly explored in New Zealand during the final year of secondary school when history students are required to “analyse the different perspectives of a contested event of significance to New Zealanders” (New Zealand Qualifications Authority, 2016). For the purposes of assessment in the New Zealand classroom a “contested event” is defined by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (2016) as:

> An event or issue which is subject to debate or argument. Debates and arguments may involve any or all of the origins, nature, and consequences of the event or issue. The contested event must have caused significant divergence of opinion at the time of the event, or since. (p. 2)

This focus on developing student awareness of the constructed, and therefore at times contested, nature of history is internationally perceived as central to developing the historical thinking of students. As Morton and Seixas (2013) argue, “reconstructions of the past are inevitably products of our own frames of reference” (p.3). Historical thinking requires that “historians make limited but justifiable inferences based on available primary source material” (Morton & Seixas, 2013, p. 3). Students need to be taught to not only recognise the historical thinking process that produce these histories, but also how to reconcile the inevitable differences of opinions that will arise as a result of differing interpretations.

New Zealand history educators and researchers have traditionally used a disciplinary approach which has been employed to understand the historical thinking of students in New Zealand. Enright (2012) has examined the recent inclusion of contested histories at NCEA Level 3 and argues that “the idea that all history is contested” should be “at the heart of redesigned programmes across NCEA levels” (p. 85). Enright (2012) believes that the opportunity afforded to teachers through the inclusion of an internal assessment at NCEA Level 3, which explores different perspectives on a contested event, allows teachers to develop disciplinary thinking among their students from NCEA Level 1 onwards. Enright (2012) argues that through the analysis of a contested event students are “encouraged and rewarded for applying approaches and insights drawn from an understanding of disciplinary thinking that requires depths of critical knowledge about the context of the contested event and nature of history that move beyond the memory-history that presently dominates secondary assessment” (p. 86).

Sheehan (2013) outlines the role of internal assessment in developing historical thinking among students in more detail as a result of a study which investigated “historical thinking in

five New Zealand secondary schools" (p. 70). As a result of this research, Sheehan (2013) argues that "conducting internally assessed course-work makes an important contribution to how students (as novices) learn how to think historically, as this process emulates how historians (as experts in the domain) generate and evaluate knowledge" (p. 70). Enright's (2012) own conclusions support Sheehan's (2013) findings. NCEA has a high internal assessment component, currently estimated at around 70 percent of student workload (George & Moir, 2018). Enright (2012) argues that internally assessing student understanding of different perspectives on a contested event facilitates the development of disciplinary thinking while also ensuring students acquire strong substantive knowledge regarding the context being studied. This substantive knowledge has a direct bearing on the student's ability to "make judgments, as a historian, on the historical validity of different perspectives of the historical event" they are analysing and directly influences their achievement (New Zealand Qualifications Authority, 2016, p. 2). Enright (2012) believes that the internally assessed standards offered by NCEA "collectively promote the development of expert practice" through the adoption of a model which follows a progression of understanding (p. 98).

Enright (2012) applies VanSledright's (2011) model of identifying and measuring progress in historical thinking to the NCEA context. The categories of novice, competent and expert are applied to all three levels of NCEA, however Enright (2012) makes it clear that while this application of VanSledright's (2011) model may inform our understandings of how students' progress (or *should* progress) in their historical thinking, it was not VanSledright's original intention for the model to be used in this way:

> VanSledright does not offer his model as a simple successive pedagogical construct. He is describing stages that stretch from students' first exposure to the discipline through to the experienced academic historian. The translation of VanSledright's novice, competent, expert progression to NCEA levels is my responsibility. It is a flawed and presumptuous application, but it appeals to me as a practicing teacher because it provides useful planning targets for building student expertise. When combined with the lack of prescription and an internal assessed outcome, I believe the progression model allows for substantial differentiation and individualisation of instruction as students are monitored. (p. 96)

Enright (2012) sees value in VanSledright's model of progression and his descriptions of novice, competent and expert as useful categories that identify "modes of historical thinking to target across the three NCEA levels" (p.95). Sheehan (2013) has taken VanSledright's (2011) model further and applied it more specifically to student understanding of

interpretation and contested histories. A framework of criteria was created to help inform teacher "understanding of student's cognition in this area" (p. 74).

Table 2.1

Levels of epistemological understanding of historical interpretation

Novice (functional):	Competent (emerging):	Expert (powerful):
Historians are able to provide a 'neutral', objective explanation of past events	**Historical accounts are interpretations and reflect historian's viewpoints.**	**Historical accounts are interpretations and reflect historians' viewpoints.** **Reasoned accounts that draw on reliable evidence are more accurate than those that do not.**
Knowledge come from an external source and is certain.	*Knowledge is generated by human minds and is uncertain.*	*Knowledge is generated by the human mind and is uncertain.*
Little grasp of the interpretative nature of historical explanations or that there are multiple versions of past events.	*Understands the interpretative nature of historical explanations and that there are multiple versions of past events.*	*Understands the interpretive nature of historical explanations and that there are multiple versions of past events.*
Trusts that the assertions of historians/textbooks are neutral and objective.	*Understands that the assertions of historians/textbooks are not neutral and objective.*	*Understands that the assertions of historians/textbooks are not neutral and objective.*
Unable to use disciplinary criteria to judge the relative merits of historical explanations.	*Unable to differentiate between historical arguments that are based on reliable, corroborated evidence and those that are not.*	*Able to differentiate between historical arguments that are based on reliable, corroborated evidence and those that are not.*

Note: Reprinted from "'History as something to do, not just something to learn': Critical thinking, internal assessment and critical citizenship" by Mark Sheehan, 2013, p.74, *New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies*, Vol, 48. Reprinted with permission from the author.

Davison, Enright and Sheehan (2014) explore the impact of internal assessment on the development of historical thinking in students through the development of a guide for teachers which aims to “enhance the disciplinary thinking of students in both their history and social studies classes” (p.4). Their research focuses on *how* young people develop their ability to think historically, arguing that the development of historical thinking leads students to “think for themselves and participate constructively in society as critical citizens” (Davison et al, 2014, p. 4). It specifically investigates the extent to which “internal assessment motivates people to think historically” and is focused on how students move through various levels of historical thinking, from novice through to expert (Davison et al, 2014, p.5). It identifies the teaching and learning of contested histories as “ideal opportunities for young people to learn how to think historically through the lenses of evidence, perspective, empathy and significance” (Davison et al, 2014, p.99).

A critique of a disciplinary approach

A disciplinary approach is valuable in that “historical thinking concepts provide structure and narrative logic to historical accounts” (Johansson & Nordgren, 2015, p.13). However, the focus on the disciplinary dimensions of the production of historical accounts through the objective application of those concepts to historical evidence can often be at the expense of exploring the cultural and social contexts both within and outside the classroom that shape the production of historical narratives. For example, while a disciplinary approach can be used to assess the criteria by which an event is deemed historically significant, Johansson and Nordgren (2015) argue that the greater challenge lies in empowering students with the ability to “discover the mechanisms of power underlying the process of ascribing significance” (p. 16). In this way, research which promotes teaching students to critically question and explore how “concepts of power, identity and agency shape all historical narratives seeks to be genuinely transformative” (Epstein & Peck, 2017, p. 2). Levtsik (2008a) also argues that models of progression in historical thinking do not fit neatly in the classroom environment, and that a focus on shifting students “from less mature to more mature historical thinking” is not necessarily helpful in attempting to understand the historical thinking of adolescents (p. 358). When using a disciplinary approach to research, Levstik (2008a) increasingly found that she “wasn’t satisfied that the features of early historical response observed in the classrooms [she] had studied were inherently immature expressions of historical thinking. Rather they appeared to persist over time in more or less sophisticated/mature forms” (p.358). Sheehan’s (2013) criteria for student understanding of historical interpretation will therefore offer insights that may aid in the analysis of the historical thinking of students explored in the case study, however it stops short of being able

to account for the social and cultural contexts that also shape and influence student understanding of history as constructed and contested. In order to “discover the mechanisms of power” that underpin how students make sense of contested histories, an alternative theoretical framework needs to be employed (Johansson & Nordgren, 2015, p.16).

A sociocultural approach to history education

More recently research in the field of history education has been conducted via the use of sociocultural theory as a guiding theoretical framework by researchers (Barton and Levstik, 2004; Bohan and Davis,1998; Barton and McCully, 2005; Levstik, 2008a, 2008b; VanSledright, 1995) in order to understand how students and teachers make sense of and understand different historical concepts. Underpinning a sociocultural approach is the belief that “historical thinking is not so much an individual as a social act framed and constrained by elements which are themselves sociocultural constructs” (Levstik, 2008b, p. 367). A sociocultural approach to history education therefore investigates “how political, social and cultural contexts influence the historical narratives produced by national, subnational or transnational communities” (Epstein & Peck, 2017, p. 3). Influencing this approach is Vygotsky’s (2004) sociocultural theory that “emphasizes that this process is necessarily situated in social contexts, and that the information to which students are exposed has been historically and socially constructed” (Barton & McCully, 2005, p. 90).

A sociocultural approach has already been applied to the New Zealand context by a number of scholars, such as Levstik (2008b) whose research identified national historical narratives as a cultural tool that students in New Zealand employ to help make sense of history. Levstik (2008b) argues that historical thinking requires students to employ a range of specific cultural tools, such as “asking historical questions, evaluating evidence, organising events chronologically, building interpretations, creating historical narratives, and more” (p.367). Historical thinking is therefore an inherently social act as “it develops in the interactions and tensions between and among thinkers, settings, means (tools), and purposes” (Levstik, 2008b, p.367). Levstik (2008b) argues that national historical narratives can have a significant influence on how students construct and make sense of history, in particular their ability to understand why people in the past acted in the way that they did - what she refers to as “perspective taking”(p.369). Levstik (2008b) concludes that the national narrative employed by New Zealand students to make sense of the past led them to be open to the perspectives of those in historical contexts removed from the New Zealand situation, but that they were often uncomfortable with “perspective taking” at a national or local level. Levstik (2008b) notes that student understanding of the national narrative is socially,

culturally and historically constructed, and therefore open to change over time. That change is possibly more likely to occur in the New Zealand context where the national narrative appears to be more fluid with “relatively few fixed points of reference or reverence” (Levstik, 2008b, p. 384). Levstik (2008b) argues that if New Zealand students were engaged earlier in perspective taking in a national context, they might be provided with the tools required to understand both historic and contemporary issues of social justice. Using the national narrative as a cultural tool for developing a student’s historical thinking is therefore both useful and problematic depending on the historical content. The problematic nature of the national narrative as an organising framework adds weight to Barton’s (2001a) argument that students should be provided with a range of frameworks through which they can make sense of the past.

Levstik’s (2008b) findings build on previous work from Barton (2001a) who has investigated how national narratives inherently structure and influence student understanding of key historical concepts in both the United States and Northern Ireland. Barton (2001a) concluded that socially and historically specific cultural tools dominate historical thinking and provide the framework for student’s interpretation of history. In the case of the United States, those cultural tools included the “use of a narrative of national progress, grounded in individual achievement” to make sense of the past, while students in Northern Ireland employ an analytic framework removed from a national narrative which allows them to “conceptuali[se] the process of change of time” (Barton, 2001a, p.906). The absence of a national narrative in Northern Ireland is instead employed as a cultural tool to make sense of the past and results in a lack of a sense of shared identity.

Barton and Levstik (2004) come together to shift their focus from the student to the student teacher, and the cultural tools used by student teachers that determine their practice in the classroom. They question why a strong disciplinary knowledge of history does not necessarily translate into effective classroom practice which develops this understanding in their students. Barton and Levstik (2004) draw the conclusion that the pedagogical practices employed by student teachers in the classroom are not necessarily the result of that student teacher’s individual disciplinary knowledge, but rather the product of their interactions with other teachers and the social context in which the teaching occurs. The dominant social practices valued by the history teaching community in the United States of America are identified as covering the curriculum and maintaining behavioural control. Student teachers, on the whole, therefore employed a range of tools to achieve these goals “such as limiting information to a single source (such as the textbook), requiring all students to learn the same body of information, and testing students on their restatement of predetermined facts and analysis” (Barton & Levstik, 2004, p.5). As a result, the desire to cover the curriculum and

maintain behavioural control of the classroom dominates classroom practice at the expense of historical thinking. Barton and Levstik (2004) maintain that it is only when a teacher has a clear sense of *purpose* in their teaching that this desire to conform to the expectations of the community can be challenged. These examples demonstrate that both teaching *and* learning history are social actions, influenced by teacher and student interactions with each other and the "predominant values systems and social practices that characterize the settings in which learning to teach occurs" (Grossman et al, 1999, p. 4-5).

More recently, in their article *"People are still Grieving": Māori and Non-Māori Adolescents' Perceptions of the Treaty of Waitangi*, Harcourt, Epstein and Sheehan (2017) explore "the extent to which Māori young people interpret the Treaty differently than those who identify as non-indigenous" using an approach that seeks to marry the strengths of sociocultural and disciplinary thinking (p. 109). Their research into the role that ethnicity plays in shaping the interpretative frameworks of young people found some commonalities, but also significant differences between ethnic groups in their interpretation of the significance of the Treaty (Harcourt et al, 2017, p. 119). As a result, Harcourt et al (2017) argue for the use of a disciplinary thinking approach to the idea of historical significance to support student "selections and explanations of historical significance with evidence and rational argument" (p.119). However, they also argue that when teaching difficult histories, a "disciplinary approach to teaching/learning history… is necessary but also insufficient" (Harcourt et al, 2017, p.119). Harcourt et al (2017) suggest that students should be encouraged to reflect on the interpretive frameworks they, and others, employ to assess the significance of an event from both a disciplinary and sociocultural approach, recognising the cultural and social forces that influence and shape their historical thinking. Through this research Harcourt et al (2017) seek to employ a sociocultural approach in the classroom that will "mobilise and complement rather than disregard disciplinary approaches" (p. 119).

A critical sociocultural approach to history education

The work of Harcourt et al (2017) was published in an edited book where Epstein and Peck (2017) articulated the idea of a critical sociocultural approach to history education. While Harcourt et al (2017) do not use the term "critical sociocultural approach" to describe their research, Epstein and Peck (2017) argue that their work, and the work of others included in the edited book, contributes to the development of this new and refined approach:

> While none of the chapters in the book employ the term, all refer implicitly or explicitly to how concepts of power, identity and/or agency influence the production and appropriation of historical narratives in specific national settings, especially as they

> relate to difficult histories, i.e. violent aspects of a national past that evoke contested and/or painful responses. (Epstein & Peck, 2017, p. 2)

Epstein and Peck (2017) also believe that a critical sociocultural approach builds on the work of Bekerman and Zembylas (2008) who have researched extensively in conflict and post conflict societies to examine the role that power plays in determining the hegemonic narratives that are performed in the classroom, while also looking at the role that emotion plays in historical thinking. Bekerman and Zembylas (2008) argue that nations, and other powerful groups, seek to promote certain emotions, such as a "feeling of belonging or pride in the past", through the use of dominant historical narratives (Epstein & Peck, 2017, p.6.). A critical sociocultural approach draws on the work of Bekerman and Zembylas (2008), and works from an assumption that sees "historical narratives as embedded in complex webs of power relations that influence whose and which historical narratives are legitimated, as well as how and why historical narratives are constructed, appropriated, contested and otherwise taken up in schools and societies" (Epstein & Peck, 2017, p.7).

Epstein and Peck (2017) have argued for the development of a conceptual framework which seeks to "highlight how concepts of power, identity and agency shape all historical narratives" (p. 7). A critical sociocultural approach provides a framework to explore how marginalised or minority groups engage with the dominant historical narrative by investigating how their historical thinking is shaped by concepts of power, identity and agency. This conceptual framework can be used not only by researchers in their investigations into the teaching and learning of historical thinking, but also by teachers to shape their pedagogical approach within the classroom. Epstein and Peck (2017) argue that "the approach foregrounds how power relations shape the broader political and cultural settings in which historical narratives are produced and circulated" and provides an opportunity for researchers, teachers, and ultimately students, to critique the inclusion of marginalised groups in the national narrative in order to assess if their inclusion is meaningful (Epstein & Peck, 2017, p.8.). A critical sociocultural approach therefore encourages students to deconstruct and critique the dominant national narratives in order to reveal "how the context, perspectives, use and effects of historical narratives serve specific aims" (Esptein & Peck, 2017, p.8).

By identifying how power structures shape the production of historical narratives, students are empowered to recognise the marginalisation of specific groups in the narrative. Epstein and Peck (2017) believe a critical sociocultural approach to history education provides the opportunity for students to "analyse their own and others narratives in ways that reveal rather than conceal or leave unattended the underlying assumptions and absences that

structure all historical narratives" (Epstein & Peck, 2017, p.9). A critical sociocultural approach moves beyond identifying and examining the sociocultural factors that shape how students interpret the past. It seeks to deconstruct the social structures that shape those understandings of the past and the historical narratives developed by national, subnational and transnational communities. Ultimately, a critical sociocultural approach aims to be more transformative by empowering students to be able to deconstruct the dominant historical narratives themselves.

If a critical sociocultural approach implores researchers (and teachers) to consider the ways in which power, identity and agency influence the production of historical narratives, it is essential to examine how history education in New Zealand, and the historical narratives it continues to enact, has been shaped. Deconstructing history education in New Zealand to uncover how power structures have influenced the production of historical narratives in the history curriculum and classrooms is essential in order to critique the inclusion of marginalised groups, not only in the historical narratives themselves, but also in the context of their wider achievement in the educational sector.

A Southern theory lens on history education in New Zealand

Our colonial history has shaped how we have taught, and continue to teach, history in New Zealand. Current debates in both history and wider education continue to reflect the imperial gaze that has shaped much of how history has been taught in New Zealand since its inclusion in the curriculum. These debates (Harris & Ormond, 2019; Ormond, 2017b; Rata, 2019; Satherley, 2019) centre around the emptying out of knowledge from the curriculum and critique the lack of New Zealand history taught in New Zealand schools. The current debate around both the place of knowledge in the history curriculum, and the role that New Zealand history should play in it, have not appeared in a vacuum. The history teaching community in New Zealand has come under sustained criticism for many years for its unwillingness to engage with the more controversial aspects of New Zealand's history. Both issues have, however, taken on new life as a result of the recently announced education reforms proposed by the new Labour-led coalition government (Education Central, 2019). The history education in New Zealand is incredibly wedded to ideas of empire and colonisation. The remainder of this chapter examines the history that sits behind these current issues and considers the extent to which an imperial and colonial gaze has influenced the teaching of history in New Zealand and continues to shape the current debate around the place of knowledge in the history curriculum.

Sheehan (2010, 2011**)** has examined the development of history education in New Zealand in extensive detail, considering the place of New Zealand itself in the history curriculum. Much of this discussion took place as a new autonomous curriculum, implemented in 2007, was set to replace the prescribed topics which had been taught in New Zealand classrooms since the late 1980s. Sheehan (2011b) notes that "New Zealand stands apart from international trends" in regards to history education (p.177). The intense public scrutiny which has accompanied the development of the history curriculum in places such as Australia and England, have not taken place in New Zealand. Sheehan (2011b) largely attributes this to the fact that the subject itself is an elective option which can only be taken in the last three years of schooling, coupled with the fact that New Zealand history itself rarely "feature[s] prominently in New Zealand programmes" (p.177). Sheehan (2010) believes that the lack of New Zealand's own history in the New Zealand history curriculum can be attributed to three "notions" around which the history curriculum was organised in the 1980s:

> First, the requirements of the examination prescriptions dominated teaching and learning. Second, the subject was structured around transmitting an established and authoritative body of knowledge (typically as outlined in textbooks) that was seldom questioned by teachers or students, and reflected how secondary teachers were trained as subject specialists. Finally, history was seen as informed by the parent discipline and, as was typical of senior subjects, there was rarely a distinction made by teachers between the school subject and the academic discipline. (p.675)

The organizing notions outlined by Sheehan are still clearly applicable to the current state of history education in New Zealand. While examination prescriptions may have disappeared as a result of the introduction of generic exam questions, Ormond (2017) convincingly argues that the internal and external assessment standards which replaced the examination prescriptions continue to determine, and narrow, the teaching and learning that takes place in class. Sheehan (2010) argues that the focus of history teachers on transmitting an established body of knowledge, and their close relationship with the parent discipline in which they were trained, led to an environment where any changes to the curriculum were viewed with suspicion. Teachers were reticent to part with topics that had an established body of historiography, in order to 'experiment' with New Zealand history and the rapidly changing historiography that had accompanied New Zealand history since the 1970s and 80s. This in turn, Sheehan argues, reinforced a conservative attitude towards the teaching of history in schools which privileged the teaching of 16th and 17th century English history (Tudor Stuart England). The dominance of the Tudor Stuart topic at Year 13 was frequently debated during the 1980s. Sheehan (2010) notes that "[l]iberals and conservatives agreed

that the subject should reflect the disciplinary features of the parent discipline; but were divided over whether '16th and 17th century England' should retain its existing dominance or that this should be replaced by '19th century New Zealand" (p.679).The call from liberal educators during the 1980s and 90s to teach the contested and controversial aspects of New Zealand's past was ultimately refuted by conservatives who "argued that the New Zealand historiography was insular and insubstantial compared to that of the UK and that not only was 16th and 17th century England relevant to New Zealand's heritage, but it was intellectually robust and well-resourced" (Sheehan, 2010, p.679).

Southern theory can be employed to explore the tension between the conservative view that has dominated the history teaching community and its relationship with the traditional canon of topics being taught in schools throughout New Zealand. In his examination of the dominance of 16th and 17th century English history in the New Zealand curriculum, Sheehan (2010) is clearly describing Hountondji's concept of 'extraversion', detailed by Connell (2014) in her discussion of Southern theory. Connell (2014) argues "the attitudes of intellectuals in the periphery is one of 'extraversion', that is being orientated to sources of authority outside their own society" (p.211). Connell (2014) uses the terms 'metropole' and 'periphery' as a way of naming the global divisions between the Northern and Southern hemispheres. Epstein and Morrell (2012) argue that Connell's work posits that the North has "dominated knowledge production, arguing that what counts as knowledge is often determined by powerful northern intellectual interests and often achieved by silencing Southern voices and marginalizing Southern perspectives" (p.471).

Through his analysis of the development of history education in New Zealand, Sheehan has illustrated the extent to which those developing the history curriculum in New Zealand have traditionally had "a strong orientation to the world centers of their disciplines in the metropole" (Connell, 2007, p.217). The development of the history curriculum in New Zealand has been characterised by the desire of some history teachers to wed themselves to established bodies of knowledge and their parent discipline (both found in the most inherently Western of institutions – the university). Of course, the universities themselves, particularly those in New Zealand, have moved on in terms of the histories they now teach their students, and it is possible to find courses that focus on rethinking New Zealand history and decolonising indigenous histories. However, Hunter (2011) brings Sheehan's observations into the more recent past, and notes that even where teachers experience:

> a variety of historical contexts and approaches at university, teachers readily assimilate into the culture, traditions and contextual preferences of school history.

> For many teachers, this means returning to familiar, fixed and uncontested history, maintained by curriculum documentation and history discourses… (p.50)

Therefore, it would seem that even universities struggle to shift student reliance on the established histories that have dominated history education. For New Zealand's history teachers, the metropolitan center has been England, as evidenced not only by the dominance of Tudor Stuart history in Year 13 history but also by the Northern perspectives evident in other areas of the history curriculum which focused on teaching the origins of the World Wars, revolution in Europe, or even New Zealand's own foreign policy (always linked to its relationship with the two great Northern powers – the United Kingdom and the United States of America). The extraversion of the history teaching community towards the metropole and 'established' knowledge sources therefore resulted in the marginalisation of New Zealand, and particularly Māori, history in the curriculum.

Despite the persistence of knowledge that originates from the metropole in New Zealand's school history, there has been increasing demand from the students themselves for New Zealand history to play a more significant role in the curriculum. On 8 December 2015 Otorohonga College students presented a petition of 13,000 signatures to the National Government which called for a national day of remembrance of the 19th century Land Wars. While the call for a day of commemoration, and possible public holiday, garnered the majority of the newspaper headlines, the students also requested that the history of the New Zealand Land Wars should be taught in all New Zealand schools. In the wake of this student action, there has been a rise in debate around the teaching of Māori history in our schools, with recent calls to implement Māori history as a core subject or make studying the New Zealand Land Wars a compulsory part of the national curriculum (Collins, 2017; Price, 2016; Smallman, 2016).

Also in 2015, the Māori History Project was launched in an attempt to empower teachers to develop history units that placed the perspectives of local Māori at the centre of the curriculum and encouraged the development of place based history that empowered teachers and students to engage with locally relevant stories of colonialism. Central to the Māori History Project was a focus on building relationships between marae and schools. Ricky Prebble, a teacher involved with the project in the Wellington region, articulated the ways in which a focus on local Māori history allows for the decentring of the Northern perspective which dominates the discipline of history:

> I think Māori history to me, short answer would be a history that focuses on Māori perspectives, iwi perspectives, that emphasises Māori agency, and Māori responding actively in their world to their circumstances. I also think that Māori history would

> incorporate a Māori worldview, which may be more challenging to incorporate into a mainstream classroom. It could legitimise different forms of evidence, so Māori history would for instance, legitimise evidence contained in waiata or mōteatea carvings, an oral testimony. I suppose those are forms of evidence that perhaps Western traditions in history have seen as less valid or less powerful. (Ministry of Education, 2019)

By recognising the validity and power of different forms of historical evidence the Māori History Project enacted Southern theory, allowing for historical narratives themselves to be constructed from a Māori perspective, and for that perspective to also shape the pedagogy used in the classroom.

Public discussion in 2018 shows that history teachers are continuing to engage with debate around the place of Māori history in the curriculum, and what happens in their classrooms. In April 2018, the New Zealand History Teacher's Association (NZHTA) conference took place in the Waikato region. The theme of the conference was *'Te Awhiorangi ki te Ao Marama – We are Making a New World'*. This theme was interpreted by the conference organisers as a challenge to history teachers to "make conscious decisions to examine New Zealand history, 'warts and all', in our classrooms" (New Zealand History Teacher's Association, 2018, p.2). The conference included a range of keynote speakers who challenged teachers to include the difficult histories of our past in our curriculum and a day touring the Waikato battle sites, hosted by the local iwi (trible) Tainui. The NZHTA Annual General Meeting took place after Dr Nepia Mahiuka delivered a powerful keynote address that emphasised the important role the teaching of New Zealand history could play in healing colonial trauma. After a discussion regarding the role NZHTA should play in advocating for the teaching and learning of New Zealand's colonial past, members of the NZHTA voted unanimously "that the NZHTA adopt an activist approach to the teaching and learning of New Zealand's colonial history" (NZHTA, 2019, para. 5). This resolution was later endorsed in a written survey by 78 percent of respondents. NZHTA's adoption of the resolution signals a shift in the role of the organisation, which had been previously characterised as "largely apolitical in orientation" and "focused primarily on preparing and distributing resources for teachers" (Sheehan, 2010, p.681).

Since the adoption of the resolution, NZHTA has moved quickly to take up its activist role. On 20 June 2018 the Chairperson of the NZHTA, Graeme Ball, appeared before the Māori Affairs Select Committee to build wider political and public support for the resolution. Ball believes that New Zealand is "in a zietgeist moment instigated in no small part by the efforts of the two Otorohonga schoolgirls, Leah Bell and Waimarama Anderson, and their New Zealand Wars commemoration petition" (NZHTA, 2019, para 7). It is not exactly clear how

the NZHTA envisage the teaching of New Zealand's past in all schools can be implemented, although NZHTA is clear that both it "and historians would view any sort of mandated 'national story' with horror, opting instead for the presenting of multiple views…" (NZHTA, 2019, para 5). What is clear, however, is that a conversation has intensified regarding the teaching of New Zealand's often difficult history in New Zealand schools. During the completion of this thesis, this desire for reform resulted in an announcement by Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern that the teaching of New Zealand history would become compulsory across both primary and secondary schools from 2022 onwards (Long, 2019). The implications of this decision will be discussed further in the concluding chapter of this thesis.

The place of 'knowledge' in the history curriculum

At the same time the opening of a discussion around the teaching of New Zealand's history has occurred, there has been increasing dissatisfaction with the impact of standards-based assessment on the narrowing of the curriculum and a call for the return to 'powerful knowledge' in the classroom. It is un-clear where the traditionally liberal desire for New Zealand history to be given a more dominant role in the curriculum, and the traditionally conservative focus on the place of substantive knowledge in the history curriculum coalesce. Concerns regarding the place of knowledge in the wider curriculum have been articulated across mainstream media as consultation begins regarding the Labour-led government's wide ranging proposed educational reforms. John Morris, former Headmaster of Auckland Grammar School, has added his voice to the chorus of those concerned that "the current focus in some schools, encouraged by the Ministry of Education, is on so-called 21st century skills to the exclusion of knowledge" (Morris, 2018, para 11). Morris contends that a "skills driven approach" to learning limits the range of experiences being offered to students, and that "unless we insist that knowledge must be at the heart of our education system it will continue to fail our most disadvantaged students and deepen inequality. Knowledge is power and knowledge liberates" (Morris, 2018, para 15-16). Morris' reference to knowledge as a liberating force mirrors the arguments of those social realists who advocate for a return to 'powerful knowledge' in the curriculum.

Social realism emerged as a force in educational research since the late 1990s/early 2000s, and its proponents heavily critique the overemphasis of the *New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2007) on 21st century skills at the expense of 'substantive knowledge'. Barrett and Rata (2014) argue that the premise of social realism is that "one of the most fundamental inequalities in education is that of access to the most powerful knowledge" and that "the central purpose of schooling and the curriculum within it must be to provide students with equitable access to powerful curriculum knowledge that is ultimately

capable of taking them *beyond* their experiences" (Barrett and Rata, 2014, p.1-3). Social realism appears to have gained currency over the last 20 years in part as a reaction to what Barrett and Rata (2014) identify as "sustained efforts intended to 'give voice' to historically marginalised groups of students by critically debunking 'official' curriculum as simply reflecting the experiences and reproducing the interests of dominant groups" (p.1). They argue that this relative focus strips the curriculum of "powerful curriculum knowledge" and ultimately negatively impacts the margainalised student groups it intended to serve in the first place (Barrett and Rata, 2014, p.1).

The concept of "powerful knowledge" promulgated by social realists is at odds with the recent changes to the New Zealand curriculum, and the social constructionist principles present in it (VanSledright, 1995). Powerful knowledge, particularly in the case of history, is perceived as 'missing' from the curriculum document, with the removal of prescribed topics and a large degree of freedom provided to individual teachers to determine the content of their programmes based on the students they have before them. This approach to the teaching and learning of history in New Zealand has been heavily critiqued for its focus on developing competencies and skills at the expense of engaging with powerful knowledge, and for letting assessment drive teacher selection of content, resulting in narrow topics that restrict the ability of students to think at a broader conceptual level (Ormond, 2014, p.154).

Morgan and Ormond (2015) argue that while affording teachers high levels of curriculum autonomy is a high trust model, it can only be executed effectively where individual teachers and curriculum leaders have the professional capability to "plan and execute programmes of learning that are coherent and future focused" (Morgan & Ormond, 2015, p.155). The need to "select historical contexts [that] address curriculum objectives and assessment requirements" is also a concern, in particular the opportunity for assessment to drive curriculum choices and result in programmes that are "limited to 'knowledge bites' suitable for addressing 'generic' examination questions" thereby limiting student exposure to various historical context and resulting in a narrow knowledge base among students (Ormond, 2017a, p.600). Ormond (2017a) highlights three forms of knowledge which she believes must be developed in unison in order to develop student "expertise in history as a discipline" (p.601). Substantive knowledge is required in order to "engage students in knowing about historical contexts, events, ideas and actions of people in past times" (Ormond, 2017a, p.601). This substantive knowledge is complemented by a knowledge of historical concepts (such as cause and consequence) and procedural knowledge – the 'how to' of analysing primary sources for instance.

Concerned that disciplinary thinking advocates appear to promote conceptual and procedural knowledge at times at the expense of substantive knowledge, Ormond posits that a strong grasp of the who, what, where and when of the past should serve as the foundation of student understanding, which combined with conceptual and procedural knowledge, facilitates "a developing expertise in history as a discipline" (Ormond, 2017a, p.601). While Ormond acknowledges that individual teachers may select and engage their students in powerful knowledge through programmes that are targeted to the needs and interests of the students in front of them, she believes that the high variability in teacher knowledge across schools could result in uncertain outcomes (Ormond, 2014, p.156). Ormond (2017b) also argues that NCEA promotes the design of history courses which narrow the historical knowledge taught to students to those that fit with the achievement standards to be assessed. She states that "teachers have clearly recognised that they have narrowed their selections to micro bites of history with an awareness that the shift in their practices have implications for learning" (Ormond, 2017b, p.109). Ormond (2017b) critiques an overall reduction in the number of topics taught at each level of the senior history curriculum and the primary role that assessment plays as the key driver in the selection of historical knowledge:

> Teachers are trapped in a cycle of narrowing programmes with fewer topics and greater depth in order to facilitate student's achievement at the higher-grade levels of 'Merit' and 'Excellence' for the NCEA. (p.112)

Ormond (2017b) contends that the selection of substantive historical knowledge in New Zealand classrooms has been overridden by teacher emphasis on "student interest and alignment of their programmes with assessment requirements over the worth of particular historical knowledge" (p.115).

The place of New Zealand's own history in the history curriculum

Sheehan (2010, 2011a) has critiqued the history curriculum in New Zealand for its failure to require study of contentious or uncomfortable history rather than the traditional canon. However, it is important to note that these critiques were made as the changes brought around by the introduction of the *New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2007) in 2007 were being enacted in the classroom and the supposed 'emptying out' of knowledge was taking place. While Sheehan felt his desire to see difficult history included in the history programmes of New Zealand classrooms had not been promoted by the previous prescriptive topics, it has since been accommodated by the inclusion of an assessment standard which asks students to "Analyse the perspectives of a contested event of significance to New Zealanders" (New Zealand Qualifications Authority, 2016). However,

given that the term 'significance to New Zealanders' has been interpreted very loosely by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority, Sheehan's desire to see *our* uncomfortable histories explored by students may not be widely realised.

In 2012 New Zealand's history curriculum saw the end of prescribed topics taught at NCEA Level 3 history. This change resulted in the opening of New Zealand's history curriculum. The removal of prescribed topics, alongside the entrenchment of standards-based assessment has resulted in a shift in both attitudes towards the teaching of New Zealand history and the ways in which history is delivered in the classroom. Connell (2007) argues that "the ways in which the production and circulation of knowledge are organized generally produce metropolitan dominance and peripheral marginality in Social Science" (p.219). Sheehan (2010) identifies two key factors that converged to ensure the dominance of 16th and 17th century English history in the New Zealand school curriculum. Firstly, those who taught in the universities were predominantly English history specialists, and as a result those teachers trained in the 1980s found that the majority of their students at university was weighted towards "what was perceived to be the most valued knowledge base in the history curriculum" (p.677). Sheehan (2010) also argues that the publications of key texts that supported the teaching of these Northern topics helped to solidify their dominance over New Zealand history in the curriculum. The publication of Graves and Silcock's authoritative textbook on 16th and 17th century English history in 1984, alongside the changeable landscape of New Zealand historiography at the time meant that "the publication of this textbook provided a firm platform for reinforcing the culturally and intellectually hegemonic position of this topic that would prove difficult to dislodge" (Sheehan, 2010, p.677). In this way, the production of knowledge via school textbooks in New Zealand helped to maintain the dominance of the metropole in New Zealand's history education from the 1980s onwards.

The introduction of the *New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2007) shifted the landscape towards providing teachers with a high degree of curriculum autonomy. While textbooks produced for use in New Zealand history classes traditionally reinforced the dominant Northern topics taught in schools, the freedom on the *New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2007), and lack of prescribed topics, has resulted in the production of textbooks that to some extent decentre the metropole and attempt to place the New Zealand experience at the heart of the curriculum[1]. However, although New Zealand history is

[1] For examples of recently published textbooks for use in New Zealand classrooms see Ball, G. (2012). *Big World, Small Country: The 20th century and New Zealand's place in it'.* Auckland: Cengage; Coutts, B., & Fitness, N. (2013). *Protest in New Zealand*. Auckland: Pearson; Coutts, B., & Fitness, N. (2018). *Pacific History*. Auckland: Cengage.

becoming increasingly better resourced, the metropole is still the focus for many teachers when structuring their teaching and learning programmes – regardless of whether the units focus on New Zealand history or an international context.

Despite offering teachers the opportunity to develop teaching and learning programmes around any historical contexts, the restrictive framework of assessment established as a result of the learning objectives in the *New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2007) has resulted in largely reinforcing the dominant position of the traditional history trope in New Zealand school history. Hunter (2011) argues that the inclusion of the term 'of significance to New Zealanders' in the history achievement objectives outlined in the curriculum:

> indicated exclusive cultural and gendered identity in light of the legacy of political and conflict based contexts of earlier history prescriptions. These contexts still dominate the enacted history curriculum. (p.59)

In her work problematising history in the New Zealand curriculum, Hunter (2011) presents the current curriculum focus on significant events as a "traditional/conservative orientation" and proposes an "alternative/counter orientation" that "engages teacher agency and frees up possibilities for students' historical thinking" (p.48). I have taken the features of these two approaches to teaching history from this study and regrouped them in the table below for easier comparative analysis (Hunter, 2011, p.48).

Table 2.2

Traditional/conservative orientation to the history curriculum compared to an alternative/counter orientation

Traditional/conservative orientation to history curriculum	Alternative/counter orientation to history curriculum
Identification of significant events Cultural reproduction by policy sanction Progress and development of powerful political systems Seeking an objective verifiable truth Attempting to reconstruct a certain past Deterministic and teleological approaches	Constructed historical processes, rather than reconstructing a found past Acknowledging history's distinctive form of narrative Historical consciousness and the social imagination Human agency as lived experience of the past Acknowledging history as a culturally

Narratives of ‘sacred’ national identities Exclusive citizenship identity Avoidance of gendered and cultural historical experiences “outside” dominant and powerful historical representations An uncontested purpose of history itself Attempting a coherence of human historical experiences Events that are distant from students’ lives and experiences of history	pluralistic and diverse discipline Engaging with ideas and multiple perspectives Interdisciplinary ways of knowing and researching Analyses of the nature of contingency Problem solving and active learning Orienting contextual decisions towards student’ interests and preferences Critiquing a variety of modes of evidence and representation Critiquing inequitable practices, dominant worldviews and practices.

Viewing these two approaches (the traditional and the alternative) through a Southern theory lens allows for a discussion of what a possible Southern theory approach to history education in New Zealand could look like. Hunter’s “alternative/counter orientation” allows for the decentring of not only the Eurocentric focus that dominates school history in New Zealand, but also the pedagogy that reinforces it.

Ormond’s (2014) belief that a curriculum with specific content should result in the more consistent teaching of ‘powerful knowledge’ to students fails to acknowledge the issues raised by both Barton and Levstik (2004) and Schar and Sperisen (2010) who recognise that the social contexts in which teachers teach can impact their delivery of the content and their pedagogy in the classroom. As Schar and Sperisen (2010) note, we cannot assume that all teachers will deliver even a prescribed curriculum in the same way. A range of socially situated factors influence practice in the classroom. Barton and McCully (2005) demonstrate that sociocultural factors also impact the ways in which student’s view the history they encounter in the classroom.

Social realists frame the place of knowledge in the curriculum as a social justice issue, arguing that access to “powerful knowledge” helps to promote equity within the education system. Ormond (2014) argues that New Zealand educational “traditions valued equity which was to be delivered through specified knowledge made available to all students”

(p.154). The belief that New Zealand's educational system is built on a foundation of equity that offered all students access to "specified knowledge" is naive at best. New Zealand's education system has never offered the same curriculum in the secondary education sphere to all its students. In his review of the educational reforms implemented in New Zealand from 1942 onwards, Openshaw (2009) convincingly details the ways in which access to a common core curriculum introduced by the Thomas Report in post-war New Zealand was manipulated along gendered and racial lines. Girls found themselves channelled away from the technical subjects offered to the boys, such as science, in favour of "easier" subjects such as history, or those that prepared them "for their future role as homemakers" (p.22). Racial stereotypes saw Māori students regardless of gender given access largely only to vocational training, with ongoing battles "for increased academic content" fought by Māori whānau (family) over many years. Even among the education of pākehā boys, Openshaw (2009) argues that the common core curriculum was applied so that students were streamed according to perceived ability, and as a result, students were given access to differing kinds of knowledge, often based along class lines. New Zealand's educational system has never truly been equitable in the knowledge it offers all its students access too. This inequity is reinforced by the continued and systemic educational underachievement of Māori and Pacific learners to this day. That this educational underachievement is the result of a lack of access to powerful knowledge as defined in this context, denies a historical legacy of inequity perpetuated by New Zealand's education system over many years. The assumption that 'powerful knowledge' is universal in its application in the classroom, also mirrors the claims of universal relevance outlined by Connell (2014) in her critique of sociological general theory. The 'universality' of powerful knowledge assumes that students will engage with that knowledge in the same way in order for it to act as an 'empowering' agent that promotes equity. Epstein's (2000) investigation into adolescent perspectives on racial diversity in United States (US) history found that the student's own "experiences with racial and ethnic privilege and subordination" shaped their perspectives on national history and that "these perspectives also share their interpretations and evaluations of primary and secondary sources, leading some young people to distrust or discredit the historical knowledge taught in schools" (p.186). Epstein's findings indicated that even when presented with substantive historical knowledge, the lens through which students access that knowledge is shaped by their sociocultural experiences. These experiences therefore impact the ways in which they engage with that history. The 'universality' and objective nature of historical knowledge cannot, therefore, be assumed.

There are concerns that the robustness required to deliver powerful knowledge in the classroom may not be realised when left up to the individual choices of teachers (Ormond,

2014, p.160). However, the selection of prescribed topics by the Government (and then by schools and teachers themselves) implicitly promoted a Eurocentric viewpoint and values structure. While topics that addressed marginalised histories were on offer in the former prescribed curriculum, the ratio of teachers choosing the Tudor Stuart England topic over 19th century New Zealand history at Year 13 provides a stark example of how a dominant group can subsume the needs of others (Sheehan, 2010). The concern of social realists that "overemphasis on matching selection to the cultural or social environment of their students" would result in the loss of powerful knowledge is supported in Ormond's work with an example of the limitations a focus on family history (micro history) could provide at the expense of broader historical ideas and themes (Ormond, 2014, p.165). The Māori History Project, however, provides clear examples where decentring of the metropole and focusing on the periphery through the use of local Māori history as a source of knowledge can provide students with an entry point from which they can examine substantive knowledge and key historical concepts that originate in the periphery. The *New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2007) provides teachers with the opportunity to draw on history from which students can engage with global Southern knowledge.

A critical sociocultural approach would certainly agree with the social realist premise that priority students deserve access to powerful knowledge and that social class (or ethnicity) should not determine the content provided at school. However, I would argue that the two do not need to be mutually exclusive. A history curriculum can still be academic, rigorous, and allow students access to knowledge that promotes deep conceptual understanding while also reflecting the cultural and social needs of the students in front of the teacher. A focus on pedagogy, which puts "the student and his or her prior knowledge and meaning-making experience at the centre of the activity in a revised history curriculum" (VanSledright, 1995, p.341) does not devalue knowledge or attempt to replace it with "only personal and relativistic interpretations" (Bohan and Davis, 1998, p.174). In many ways a curriculum which is flexible and responds to the needs of the students in front of it has the potential to deliver more powerful knowledge than a prescribed national curriculum that may privilege the Western canon. There is a real tension here and a need to ensure that the knowledge students access through the history programmes on offer at their schools facilitate the development of a deep understanding of history and its discipline, while also ensuring that the dominant culture is not privileged or deciding for others what constitutes valuable historical knowledge.

Summary

This chapter has outlined a range of approaches to the teaching and learning of history in the New Zealand context. It has used a Southern theory lens to explore the development of history education in New Zealand and argues that the current debate that surrounds the place of knowledge in the history curriculum reflects a colonial and imperial history that privileges the Eurocentric canon. This chapter concludes by arguing that the *New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2007) offers the opportunity for New Zealand history teachers to select historical knowledge that can be transformative and empowering, rather than reinforcing the dominant Eurocentric culture. It contends that a critical sociocultural pedagogical approach to the teaching and learning of history has the potential to deliver transformative historical knowledge to all learners. The role of identity in accessing such meaningful and transformative historical knowledge, particularly for Pacific learners, will be examined in the following chapter through the presentation of the second part of the literature review. This chapter will canvass the extant research which explores how students make sense of the history they encounter in the classroom.

Chapter Three: Literature Review

Introduction

The previous chapter explored the contextual literature that outlines the nature of the debates in history education, with particular reference to the New Zealand experience. Its focus was the debates that have influenced the current position and status of history education in New Zealand. The second set of literature discussed in this chapter is more commonly recognised as the research literature. This chapter will canvass the research that others have undertaken to explore how students make meaning of history as taught. This literature review looks at studies that employ a sociocultural approach and seek to understand how "factors related to young people's ethnic, class or national identities influence their thinking about historical concepts and methods" (Epstein, 1997, p.28). It begins by considering the role that identity, with particular reference to the national narrative, plays in shaping the historical thinking of students at both a national and international level. I then narrow the focus of the chapter to explore New Zealand specific literature which explores the role ethnic identity plays in student understanding and interest in history. The chapter concludes with an exploration of the role that identity plays in the engagement of Pacific learners with the New Zealand education system. I consider the limited nature of the existing literature around how Pacific learners make sense of history in New Zealand classrooms and argue for a sociocultural approach to research which sheds light on how Pacific learners make meaning in the history classroom and the implications of that understanding for a broader social justice agenda in the teaching of history.

The influence of identity on how students engage with history

The international literature, which explores how the world beyond the classroom walls shapes student's historical thinking, follows two predominant themes – those that assess the impact of pedagogy or curriculum on student perspectives of history, and those that explore how sociocultural contexts influence the ways students make meaning of history in the classroom. In his comparative study of history education, Barton (2001b) investigated how politics and policy have influenced the teaching of national history in both the United States of America (US) and Northern Ireland. Barton (2001b) explored how students in the US and Northern Ireland made meaning of history in an effort to understand how the historical

thinking of students was shaped by the differing priorities that structured history education in both countries. As a result of an American emphasis on telling a national story that focuses on "the development of the US as a social and political entity" (Barton, 2001b, p.49) Barton found that the historical understanding of American students was characterised by repeated narratives of progress and the achievements of exceptional individuals. Alternatively, students in Northern Ireland were more likely to have a sophisticated understanding of historical concepts, reflecting their curriculum's "emphasis on analysis and interpretation of historical evidence" (Barton, 2001b, p.50). This emphasis largely stems from the Northern Irish positioning of history education as "the study of the nature of human societies at a variety of times in the past" (Barton, 2001b, p.50). This positioning is perhaps unsurprising given the troubled and complex history and present-day situation of Northern Ireland does not lend itself as neatly to the narratives of progress promulgated by the United States of America. Barton's (2001b) study sheds a light on the power that political considerations and the idea of nation plays in shaping national history curriculums, and consequently the ways in which teachers teach and students learn.

Barton and McCully (2005) built on Barton's earlier exploration of Northern Irish history education by assessing the impact of the curriculum on historical understanding and further delving into the role that identity plays in shaping students' ideas and perspectives on history. History education in Northern Ireland is perceived by many in that country as a way of offsetting divisions in society by "providing [students] with neutral and balanced portrayals of controversial issues or by emphasizing non-politicized skills of academic study" (Barton & McCully, 2005, p.85). This aim has led to the previously described emphasis on the analysis and interpretation of historical evidence in the Northern Irish history curriculum. Barton and McCully (2005) examined "the connections that students in Northern Ireland make between history and identity" and assessed the impact of the national curriculum on the development of those ideas (p.85). They found that:

> Students neither reject school history outright nor use it to replace prior, community based historical narratives. Rather, they draw selectively from the school curriculum (and other sources) to support a range of developing historical identities. (Barton & McCully, 2005, p.86.)

Barton and McCully's (2005) study highlights the constructed nature of an adolescent's historical understanding. It argues that students actively engage in a process of selection,

underpinned by prior knowledge, in order to make sense of the history they encounter in a range of different sites.

While Barton (2001a) has focused on the religious and political identities of students in a Northern Irish context, others have explored more explicitly racial identity in the US context and considered how it impacts teaching and learning in the classroom. Using a sociocultural framework, Epstein, Mayorga and Nelson (2011) investigate the impact of culturally responsive teaching strategies on student perspectives of race and history in an urban history class. The study follows the students of Ms. Vega and her efforts to teach the history of America using culturally responsive strategies that position people of colour as "agentic, individual and collective actors in history and society" (Epstein et al, 2011, p.4). This approach also requires teachers to complicate the position of white Americans in historical narratives and present them as a diverse group of historical actors. Through their exploration of the teaching and learning which takes place in Ms. Vega's classroom, Epstein et al (2011) evaluate the efficacy of culturally responsive teaching through an exploration of student perspectives towards race and history.

Epstein et al (2011) used student responses from the beginning and end of the year to assess the impact of culturally responsive teaching strategies on their attitudes towards race and history. The study asked students to select the eight most important historical actors and events in US history from a set of 25 selections, before writing a narrative of the "experiences of people of color and men over the course of national history, as well as the role of the government in shaping racial groups" (Epstein et al, 2011, p.7). The study identified a range of positive effects from the culturally responsive strategies employed by Ms Vega in class. The students' understanding of the complexity of racism increased and many came to view those groups previously painted as marginalised or victims in the national narrative as groups and individuals with their own agency and power. However, Epstein et al (2011) note that the study also "suggest[s] limits to the amount or kind of change one teacher can make in a year" (p.16). Notably, students were still relatively unwilling to engage with the notion that white Americans were diverse in their historical experiences. Epstein et al (2011) attribute this reluctance to the fact that "most of the students in the study lived in segregated neighborhoods… had little contact with white peers and their interactions with white adults in government agencies or the criminal justice system reinforced negative images of white dominance" (p.16). In this instance, therefore, it appeared that the actions of the teacher could not mitigate the life experience of students. Consequently, it was life experience which ultimately shaped their perspectives related to

this aspect of their historical understanding. Like Barton's (2001a, 2001b) comparative studies of Northern Ireland and the United States of America, Epstein et al (2011) look to understand the interplay between the sociocultural worlds of the students and the curriculum they engage with the classroom, and the extent to which those factors shape or change historical thinking.

What remains consistent across the work of Barton (2001a, 2001b), Barton and McCully (2005), and Epstein et al (2011) is the desire of the researchers to explore the extent to which the actions of teachers, pedagogy and curriculum choices can impact and change how students make sense of history. All three studies use student responses to history to understand how students make sense of the history they encounter both in and outside the classroom, and to understand the role that identity and ethnicity plays in that sense-making.

National narratives and making meaning of history

Much of the research that explores how students make meaning of history engages with their perspectives on national history and the narratives that structure it. Given the politicised role that history plays in many countries, such as promoting social cohesion or narratives of progression and exceptionalism, many researchers have found that investigating the perspectives of minority students on national history serves to illuminate the ways in which race and ethnicity influence student understanding of history. Epstein (2000) investigates young people's perspectives on racial diversity in US history, examining how the racial identities of students impact their interpretation of history. Epstein (2000) makes it clear that she intends to move the discussion regarding the historical understanding of students away from a focus on their cognitive abilities towards a sociocultural analysis of the ways in which factors such as racial ethnicity shape student understanding of history. She argues it is important that we understand the role that identity plays in shaping how students make meaning of history in order for teachers to recognise that "adolescents' historical perspectives may differ from and even contradict their own" (Epstein, 2000, p.205). Epstein (2000) examines student perspectives on racial diversity in US history arguing that the inadequacy of academic approaches to the teaching of US history stems from a lack of engagement with the perspectives of students themselves. Furthermore, Epstein (2000) found that the racial groups with which students identify lead them to 'construct' different perspectives on racial diversity in US history. African American students in particular constructed narratives "marked by relations of racial domination and subordination" (Epstein, 2000, p.202). In sharp contrast, white Americans "constructed a narrative which, from its

inception, represented the principals of individual rights and democratic rule" (Epstein, 2000, p.197). This narrative persists among European American students even though the students themselves recognise that groups at varying times in US history lacked fundamental rights.

Barton and Levstik (2008) also investigate student understanding of the national narrative, albeit from a general perspective that references the racial identity of participants but does not dive deeply into how those racial identities impact student understanding. Unlike Epstein (2000), who worked only with African American students and targeted perspectives about racial diversity in particular, Barton and Levstik (2008) worked with a multicultural group of participants, many of whom identified with more than one ethnic group. They also left students to ascribe significance themselves to the events they selected during the research. As a result Barton and Levstik (2008) found that they were able to make generalisations from their study on the ways in which students understood historical significance as it related to US national history. Barton and Levstik (2008) found that in general the students involved in the study subscribed to a progressive and exceptional narrative when constructing their history of the US.

The progressive narrative that structures the historical thinking of American students in this study is further highlighted by Barton's (2008) deeper probing into his comparative study of Northern Ireland and the US to identify "culturally specific features of historical thinking" and those that occur in a variety of contexts (p.301). Barton (2008) examines the cultural tools used by students in each context to make sense of history, in particular the "format in which historical information is presented" (p.301). In the US, history is presented in "the form, of narratives – temporally ordered sequences of events that are causally linked" (p.302), while the Northern Irish employ an analytical framework. As previously discussed in Barton's (2001b) article, this difference in the presentation of history is largely attributed to the differing priorities of each country regarding history education. Barton (2008) asks the participants of his study to explain "how and why life has changed over time" (p.303). He found that American students employed narratives of progression and individual invention to explain how the lives of people changed over time. Overwhelmingly, the concept of historical change was perceived as positive "straightforward, linear and generally beneficial" by American students (Barton, 2008, p.311). While students in Northern Ireland also at times employed narratives of progress of invention at time to explain historical change, they were much less likely to suggest that all change was progress and often attributed change to wider social, political or economic contexts. This demonstrated a marked difference in the

historical thinking of Northern Irish and American students, with the latter focused on the actions or achievements of individuals. Barton (2008) concludes that “these differences indicate that in at least some occasions, students in two countries are making use of differing cultural tools to think about historical change” (p.315).

There are, however, examples in Barton and Levstik’s (2008) study where racial, rather than national, identity began to shape and influence student understandings of US history. Barton and Levstik (2008) discuss how students reconcile this overarching progressive narrative with events that “cannot easily be assimilated into a story of progress and exceptionality” (p.251). This led to a discussion of the different ways in which European and African American students negotiate issues of race and gender in US history. Barton and Levstik (2008) argue the “students maintained an alternative story” to that of the progressive national narrative, and that “some events could not be reconciled with examples of progression” (p.259). However, despite maintaining this alternate story, students lacked an effective framework through which they could negotiate these tensions. Barton and Levstik (2008) argue that the absence of any framework to unpack these contradictions for students reflects the lack of complexity in the delivery of the history curriculum. They suggest problematising US history in the classroom as a way to remedy the situation.

The particularity of a case study, and the extent to which sociocultural factors other than identity can also shape historical understanding in students, is brought into sharp relief by Tinkham’s (2017) study of the engagement of First Nations peoples with historical narratives in the classroom. Tinkham (2017) explores how Mi’kmaw students in Nova Scotia make meaning of the historical contexts they encounter in their Social Studies education. In particular, she investigates how students reconciled the Social Studies content they were presented with at school, with the historical narratives they engaged with in their communities. Tinkham (2017) conducted a comparative study that looked at two groups of Mi’kmaw students. She found that the ways in which students reconciled tensions between what they learned at school and what they learned at home was “context dependent” (p.130). Participants who attended Ni’newey school district “were willing to allow Mi’Kmaw history and the content contained in the prescribed curriculum to coexist in complementary ways” (Tinkham, 2017, p.124). They wanted more Mi’Kmaw history to be taught, however they did not argue that this content should necessarily replace existing content in the curriculum but complement it. This desire for complementary narratives is attributed to the strong relationship between the community and the school, reflected in the culturally negotiated pedagogy used in class (Tinkham, 2017, p.125). When tensions arose between

the narratives presented in class and those from home “the teachers were there as nurturing guides to help [students] navigate” (Tinkham, 2017, p.125).

Participants from the Welte’temsi school system however, believed their curriculum lacked any meaningful inclusion of Mi’Kmaw content (aside from a particular course taught by the only Mi’kmaw staff member). Tinkham (2017) found that the students were left to negotiate any tensions between the official curriculum and their own knowledge of historical narratives on their own. Despite the well-meaning efforts of some non-Mi’kmaw staff, the participants at Welte’temsi felt their identity was not reflected in the curriculum and wanted more Mi’Kmaw content to be included (Tinkham, 2017, p.128). Both sets of participants wanted their history to be woven through the curriculum in order to prevent its marginalisation. Where the two groups differed was in the support they had to negotiate any tensions between their existing sociocultural knowledge and the knowledge they encounter at school. Tinkham (2017) argues that the lack of connection felt by the Welte’temsi participants to their culture in school is a reflection of the absence of any cultural negotiated pedagogy. Tinkham’s (2017) study makes clear that while racial or ethnic identity plays a considerable role, other important contextual factors also shape the ways in which students make meaning from and engage with historical narratives.

Students make meaning of history in the New Zealand context

National narratives are therefore acknowledged as a powerful cultural tool that shape the ways in which students make meaning of history. Because national narratives vary from each context, so too do the ways in which students’ approach and engage with the history they encounter in their classroom. Levstik (2008b) explores the role national narratives play in shaping the historical thinking of students in a multicultural country such as New Zealand. Levstik (2008b) explored the “impact of national narratives on perspectives taking – the ability of students to understand why people in the past acted in ways they did” (p.369). By exploring the ways that students employed national narratives to ascribe historical significance to events from New Zealand’s past, Levstik (2008b) also sought to explore the ways in which students engaged with the perspectives of others in history. She found that the students’ perceptions of their country and its history were shaped by a national narrative that situated New Zealand largely on the margins. This was reflected in New Zealand’s relationship with larger countries such as Great Britain and the United States of America. Levstik (2008b) also found that New Zealand students had a clear sense of the ‘moral weight of the past” (p.375). The students involved in the study felt it was important to be aware of

other parts of the world, but that New Zealand should also stand up to larger world powers, citing examples such as the 1980s nuclear free movement. Their perception of New Zealand being on the margins was also reflected in student belief that often the world paid little attention to New Zealand. Levstik (2008b) found that this perception sharply influenced student ideas around historical significance, with events that garnered world attention being ascribed the most significance among students.

For the majority of participants, the idea of 'fairness' also underpinned their selections of significant events. When combined with a belief that New Zealand should stand up to world powers, Levstik (2008b) argues "these students crafted a historical narrative with distinctive moral underpinnings" (p.379). However, in many ways like their counterparts in the US (Barton & Levstik, 2008) the participants struggled to reconcile ongoing racial inequality and tensions in New Zealand with a national narrative that centers around the ideas of fairness and teaching the rest of the world what was right. Levstik (2008b) found an overarching interest among students to learn about history that took place outside of New Zealand. She attributes this interest to a focus in the New Zealand curriculum on studying world cultures, but also the relative comfort students found in exploring the perspectives of others in a way that "does not necessarily challenge students to reconsider the perspectives of their own local communities of identification" (Levstik, 2008b, p.384). In their discussion of the Treaty of Waitangi, Levstik (2008b) found that students struggled to recognise different perspectives related to local or national history. She attributes this reluctance to engage not only to the student's inability to distance themselves from their own perspectives informed by their racial identity, but also a general lack of understanding of New Zealand's national history among students. Without it, Levstik (2008b) argues the students lack "the tools necessary to make sense out of the continuation of inequality, injustice or immorality on the nation or local history" (p.385). She suggests that the earlier introduction of national history in the New Zealand curriculum could provide a framework through which students could negotiate these tensions in order to engage in "perspective taking" in their own national context (Levstik, 2008b, p.385).

The relationship between the interpretative frameworks of students and areas of interest in history

Hunter and Farthing (2009) explored areas of student interest in history through a study which asked Year 11 and 13 students at a New Zealand secondary school to voice their historical thinking. Using a questionnaire and metaphor task, students were asked why they

study history and what areas of history they would choose to study if given the choice. The responses revealed a significant shift in thinking from Year 11 to 13. The Year 11 students demonstrated “an interest in ancient history” and the desire to learn about the historical origins of current issues such as racism and terrorism (Hunter and Farthing, 2009, p.54). Year 13 responses reflected their experience of the New Zealand history curriculum over the previous two years, selecting historical forces such as imperialism, as the contexts they would like to further study in history. Both Year 11 and 13 students saw history as a subject that enabled people to make sense of current issues through investigation of the past and as “promoting a kind of moral conscience” (Hunter & Farthing, 2009, p.55). Of significant interest is the finding that:

> Students saw history learning as supporting understandings of cultural diversity and global and personal identity formation. Students in both cohorts acknowledged that learning about identity, culture and heritage is a special dimension of history. This was generally perceived positively in relation to personal and global identity shaping, and to be avoided in relation to Aotearoa New Zealand histories. (Hunter & Farthing, 2009, p.57)

This reluctance of students to engage in issues of identity and culture in the New Zealand context is reflective of Levstik’s (2008b) findings in which New Zealand students struggled to engage in perspective taking in the context of our own national history. This antipathy towards issues of identity in our national history is perhaps not surprising given that Hunter and Farthing (2009) found that students had little awareness of the constructed and contested nature of history. It is, however, concerning that this hostility towards New Zealand history, and exploring the multiple identities and perspectives that it encompasses, seems to pervade the perceptions of New Zealand students towards their own history.

Hunter and Farthing (2008) had previously examined how Year 11 students made sense of history through the significance they ascribed to different historical concepts. Their study found that participants perceived those concepts emphasised in the New Zealand school history curriculum and assessment, such as cause and effect or historical perspectives, were reflected in student selection of the most important historical concepts. Students overwhelmingly perceived history as being about “past events and actions creating change” (Hunter & Farthing, 2008, p.20). Concepts such as the notion of narrative were ranked by students as the least significant. This result is unsurprising given the absence of stories of nationhood from the New Zealand curriculum, and a Year 11 history programme that

traditionally “focused largely on 20th century political and conflict history” (Hunter and Farthing, 2008, p.19). While the racial identity of the students involved in the study was not a focus of the study and its findings, Hunter and Farthing (2008) do remark on the differences in the significance ascribed to the range of historical concepts by Māori participants.

While some participants viewed ‘power’ as an important historical concept when it related to ideas around decision making in history, the researchers stated:

> The most intriguing and significant discourse of the students (mostly aged 16) is that they hold personal power, that power doesn’t matter in light of being your own person: No matter what sort of power you hold in the world it does not make you higher than anyone else and does not identify you…. (Hunter and Farthing, 2008, p.18)

This idealistic perception of the individual being more important than power, has led students to place power in the mid-range group of historical concepts. Māori students, however, placed power in the most significant historical concept grouping, suggesting that their understanding of power as a historical concept may differ from the majority of students. Interestingly, the historical concept of the nation was also rated lower by Māori students. While the reasoning behind this difference in ranking is not explored in Hunter and Farthing’s 2008 study, it begs the question – in what way does the racial identity of students shape their understandings of historical concepts, especially in a bicultural society such as New Zealand?

As previously discussed, Harcourt et al (2017) have recently investigated the historical understanding of young Māori in more detail, in particular “the extent to which Māori young people interpret the Treaty differently than those who identify as non-indigenous” (p.109). They argue it is particularly important to understand how race and ethnicity shape understandings of history given the bicultural nature of New Zealand society. Harcourt at al (2017) draw on a critical sociocultural framework that acknowledges the role that identity, in this case racial identity, places in shaping how students engage with concepts such as historical significance. The study asked participants to respond to the question “Is the Treaty of Waitangi significant to New Zealanders today? Why?” (Harcourt et al, 2017, p.113). Māori student responses to the question most commonly explained the Treaty as significant because it was “an agreement of some sort” (Harcourt et al, 2017, p.114). A substantial number of Māori students also viewed the Treaty as significant due to its importance for

Māori (Harcourt et al, 2017, p.114). Māori students also acknowledged conflict related to the Treaty, both at the time and in present day Aotearoa.

Pākehā student responses, while also most commonly explaining the Treaty as an agreement, were far less likely to reference any conflict or contested views regarding the Treaty. Instead many responses focused on the "connection between past and present" (Harcourt et al, 2017, p.114). Harcourt et al (2017) also explored the responses of Pacific and Asian learners, noting that the responses of Pacific learners also saw the Treaty as an agreement and, like Pākehā, referred to the history of the Treaty as explaining the present. However, the responses of Pacific learners also mirrored the responses of Māori by highlighting conflict in relation to the Treaty and acknowledging that this conflict was still ongoing. Overall, Harcourt et al (2017) found that the student responses reflected the current importance placed on the Treaty in wider New Zealand society with only 5 percent of respondents perceiving the Treaty as not significant (p.117).

While the response of ethnic groups to the question were similar in many ways, there are also striking differences. In particular "Māori, Pasifika and Asian responses were more than twice as likely as Pākehā to explain the Treaty as a source of conflict or controversy" (Harcourt et al, 2017, p.117). Māori were also much more likely to make a personal connection with the Treaty, often expressing an ongoing sense of loss or grievance over the Treaty and its consequences. Harcourt et al (2017) argue that these findings have important implications for the teaching and learning of this difficult aspect of New Zealand's history. They believe that understanding both the similarities and differences in how students make sense of the historical significance of the Treaty could lead to the development of "more culturally responsive policies and practice" (p.120). The work of Harcourt et al (2017) clearly establishes that racial identity influences how students interpret the Treaty and its significance. It therefore follows that the racial identity that students in New Zealand identify with will not only shape the ways in which they make sense of a range of historical thinking concepts, but also the ways in which they engage with different historical contexts.

Harcourt et al (2017) have made a significant contribution to research that seeks to understand how identity influences the ways students interpret and understand difficult history, in the New Zealand context. For the purpose of this study, it also begins to explore the ways in which Pacific learners make meaning of history and interpret historical significance. This is currently a severely under researched aspect of history education in New Zealand. The ways in which Pacific learners understand history in the New Zealand

context have seldom been explored on their own terms and are usually an adjunct to research that seeks to understand the different ways Māori and Pākehā make sense of their shared history. Literature does exist which explores the role that ethnic and cultural identity plays in the educational engagement and achievement of Pacific learners. It is important to canvas this literature in order to understand the important role that identity plays in the educational success of Pacific learners. If this research is to explore how my students make sense of the history they encounter in the classroom, from a sociocultural perspective it is essential that I understand the role that ethnic and cultural identity plays in the lives and education of my students. However, before the role that identity plays in the education of the participants in this study is discussed, it is necessary to provide the educational context in which the predominantly Pacific learners who participated in this study reside.

Pacific learners and the New Zealand education system

The inequity of the New Zealand education system for Pacific peoples has been recently charted by Salesa (2018). He outlines how the introduction of "Tomorrow's Schools" in 1989 saw the decentralization of schools, establishment of local Boards of Trustees to run them and the introduction of local zoning and decile ratings to allocate school funding based on the socio-economic status of the local community. Salesa (2018) states that these changes resulted in a "white flight" from low decile schools that saw "between 1991 and 1996 – a mere five years – the number of Pākehā in decile 1 schools in Auckland dro[p] by 39.9%" (p.73). This trend has never reversed itself. Salesa (2018) argues that "the legacy of these developments is a deeply divided and unequal schooling system which is, in many places, effectively racially segregated" (p.74).

That New Zealand's education system fails many Māori and Pacific learners is widely accepted (Clark, 2015; Redmond, 2017; Salesa, 2018; Walters, 2018). Initiatives such as the *Pasifika Education Plan* have been introduced and undertaken by successive governments in a effort to raise the achievement of Pacific learners in the mainstream education system. Introduced in 2006 with the goal of "raising achievement for each Pasifika student and their families" (Ministry of Education, 2006, p.3), the *Pasifika Education Plan* focused on:

- participation and quality in early childhood education
- strong literacy and numeracy foundations in schooling, and making sure students are engaged in learning, and

- transitioning students into higher levels of learning and achievement in tertiary education

(Ministry of Education, 2006, p.4)

More recently, the Ministry of Education has released *Tapasā*, a cultural comptencies framework for non-Pacific teachers of Pacific learners. *Tapasā* sits within the *Pasifika Education Plan* and aims to build "Pasifika cultural competencies across the education workforce" (Ministry of Education, 2018, p.3). The release of this framework has been supported by nationwide professional learning workshops which aim to familiarise teachers with the document and provide practice strategies for its implementation in schools (Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand, 2019). Under the National Government's term from 2008 to 2017, a concerted effort was made by the then Minister of Education, Hekia Parata, to lift the number of Pacific learners achieving at NCEA Level 2. Targeting achievement at this level of the curriculum appeared to be particularly successful under Parata's leadership. There was a clear growth in Pacific learners achieving NCEA Level 2, rising from 50.5 percent to 79.5 percent between 2008 and 2016. However, this lift in achievement did not necessarily equate to an increase in equitable educational outcomes for Pacific learners. Salesa (2018) notes that while the achievement rate for Pacific learners at NCEA Level 2 increased, much of this increase was a result of directing Pacific learners towards subjects "that limited subsequent opportunities – particularly in maths and science subjects" (p.76). The limitations of these subjects at Level 2 of the curriculum are reflected in University Entrance pass rates which at 30.7 percent for Pacific learners, are signficanctly lower than their European counterparts at 57.8 percent (Redmond, 2017).

Pacific learners have been, and continue to be, underserved by the New Zealand education system and a "powerful public discourse" which perceives decile ratings not as a measure of the socio-economic status of the local community, but the quality of the school itself (Salesa, 2018. p.74). The term "low decile" has become synomous with "low quality", and as Salesa (2018) notes "while not all low-decile schools are majority Māori and Pacific, all majority Māori and Pacific schools are low decile" (p.75). Correlating low decile status with poor quality education therefore impacts Māori and Pacific learners dispproportionately and attitudes such as these are a contributing factor to wider issues of deficit theorising in the classroom. The negative impact of deficit theorising on the educational experiences of Māori students has been explored in-depth (Bishop & Berryman, 2006, 2009; Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Bishop et al, 2003). The rest of this chapter will explore the extent to which this

narrative of Pacific underachievement and deficit theorising influences the identities ascribed to Pacific learners in the classroom.

Identity and Pacific learners in the classroom

When considering the role identity plays in student understanding of history, the terms used to describe students involved in this study, such as Pacific Islanders, Pasifika and Pacific learners, can be perceived as problematic and are subject to debate. Pacific peoples accounted for 7.3 percent of the total population in New Zealand in 2013. Within that 7.3 percent is a variety of different ethnic groups. Almost half of the Pacific population in New Zealand is Samoan (48.7%), with the next two significant groups being Cook Island Māori (20.9%) and Tongan (20.4%), followed by Niueans (8.1%). Pacific peoples in New Zealand are a predominantly young people, with 46.1 percent being under the age of 20 (compared to 27.4% for the total population). The terms Pacific Islanders and Pasifika have been criticised as a 'blanket term' which "conceals and undermines the historical, social, political and cultural uniqueness of each Pacific Islands society" (Coxton, Foliaki & Mara, 1994, p.181). However, Samu (2015) argues that the collectivising term 'Pasifika' has much value. She notes that the term originates from the cultural groups it seeks to describe and, in this way, empowers them. Samu (2015) also argues the term 'Pasifika' is not intended to homogenise those who fall under its umbrella, instead it acts as a "unifying concept… countering oppositional forces such as assimilation and social/economic/cultural marginalization" (p.133). Samu (2015) posits:

> A Pasifika identity-montage affirms multiple-heritage. It excuses partial cultural literacy and provides a degree of social credibility. It is inclusive (albeit selectively) of the historical and contemporary socio-political issues of Pasifika. Such identities may not be articulated clearly by young Pasifika learners in schools. However, if they are listening to hip-hop music and wearing clothes from the Dawn Raid label and watching the annual *Style Pasifika* fashion show, and animated comedy series *BroTown* on television, then they are being exposed to, and participating in, the process of new ethnic identity formation taking place amongst many New Zealand-born Pasifika peoples. (p.134)

It is this 'identity-montage' and its socio-political influences that shapes the understandings of the students in my classroom. The 'Pasifika umbrella' is therefore a diverse, fluid term used to describe a multiethnic group living in New Zealand. This process of identity

formation described by Samu (2015) is shaped by external forces, and therefore the identity of my Pacific learners can also be shaped or influenced in the classroom by those educators who allocate or ascribe particular characteristics to them. This is particularly important to be aware of when considering the relationship between identity and the educational achievement of Pacific learners, as Pasikale (1999) notes that "for Pacific Island people, the sense of being (or identity) is strongly influenced by the environment" (p.5). Given that the school environment features heavily in the lives of youths, it can be logically assumed that the identities ascribed to Pacific youth by their teachers has significant impact on their educational engagement and achievement.

The identities ascribed to Pacific peoples are often defined by characteristics that focus on deficit, in particular low socioeconomic status and educational underachievement. Nakhid (2002) explored this aspect of Pacific identity in-depth when she investigated "how institutional perceptions of marginalised groups of students affect their achievement" (p.1). Nakhid (2002) examined how being ascribed an identity defined by others, and based on often inaccurate perceptions, results in processes and institutions which fail to reflect the students they serve. These institutions, and their responses, are therefore often ineffective at best, detrimental at worst, to the achievement of marginalised groups. Nakhid (2002) argues that the identity ascribed to Pacific peoples by educators, which focuses predominantly on socio-economic status, does not align with the identities constructed by Pacific students themselves. She argues that Pacific learners do not see socio-economic status as a key factor in their educational achievement, however this factor is often highlighted by educators when working with this group and therefore shapes their responses to them. Because this identity ascribed to Pacific learners does not marry with their own perceptions of themselves, the response of educators is therefore likely to be inappropriate and will fail to reflect the student's identifying process. Nakhid (2002) argues for the space for students to go through an "identifying process" and for the results of that process to be valued by educators and reflected in the school environment so that Pacific learners can see themselves "in the school picture" (p.6).

Siteine (2010) builds on the premise established by Nakhid (2002) in her discussion of the allocation of Pasifika identity in New Zealand classrooms. Siteine (2010) explores the ways in which classroom teachers interpret and apply the concept of identity which pervades New Zealand curriculum documents. She believes that this focus on identity in the curriculum leads teachers to "allocate a form of identity to their students" and that "the allocation of identity is directly related to and a consequences of the choices teachers make about the

content of their classroom programs" (p.1). Siteine (2010) found that teachers interpreted the concept of identity referenced in the national curriculum documents in two ways – as ethnic or national identity. Very rarely did teachers include both forms of identity in their teaching and learning programs, instead choosing to focus on one at the expense of another. Siteine (2010) argues that a result of this "teacher-determined focus on either national or ethnic identity" is "an unconscious allocation of student's identity as either a shared, common identity or a distinct bounded one" (p.2).

Siteine (2010) cites the desire of teachers to be "culturally responsive" in their teaching as a significant factor that lead to the allocation of a particular identity to Pacific learners. Mirroring Nakhid (2002), Siteine (2010) argues that the 'Pasifika' identity allocated to students is often shaped by deficit views and/or ideological assumptions rather than lived realities. The allocation of particular identities to students also prevents the students from exercising choice around which identities they ascribe to. Siteine (2010) argues that attempts to affirm Pasifika identity in the classroom can often take the form of "cultural tourism" and originate from teacher perceptions of Pasifika identity which do not necessarily reflect the identities of the Pacific learners themselves. This allocation of identity in the classroom can also contribute to the disempowerment of students by removing the choice for them to self-identify with their own ethnic group. Siteine (2010) argues that "the allocation of Pasifika identity, then, may force rather than affirm an identity" (p.9). This lack of choice is further compounded by the Pasifika label itself which can obfuscate the diversity of the ethnic groups represented by it.

Turner, Rubie-Davies and Webber (2015) directly explored the relationship between teacher expectations and student ethnicity. They determined that many teachers attribute the low achievement of Pacific learners to deficits in their home environments. The teachers involved in the study had low expectations of the Pacific students in their classrooms which Turner et al (2015) attribute to "deficit beliefs about Pasifika, a lack of understanding of Pasifika student's identity, poor student-teacher relationships and ineffective pedagogy" (p.57). These students were often characterised by the teachers as lacking ambition and motivation. Turner et al (2015) found that these low expectations were often compounded by the academic streaming of students in schools. Pacific learners are often overrepresented in lower classroom streams. The mathematics teachers in this study acknowledged that their expectations of students were influenced by the streams they were placed in, with teachers expecting less of those who were in lower streams. These low expectations were often reflected in pedagogical choices made by the teachers who offer "less exciting and

challenging work" to students in lower streams (Turner et al, 2015, p.65). Turner et al (2015) argues that "this differentiation in opportunity to learn contributes directly to the widening of the achievement gap" (p.65).

The role that the concept of identity can play in the educational engagement and achievement of Pacific learners is therefore complex, and problematic. However, the overarching conclusion is that identity, whether self-identified or allocated, plays a significant role in the teaching and learning of Pacific learners in New Zealand classrooms. An overarching 'Pacific' identity can serve to homogenise what are very distinct ethnic groups, while often the identities ascribed to Pacific learners by others are focused on characteristics defined by deficit. These identities rarely, if at all, align with the identities of the students themselves. From a socio-cultural perspective, it is therefore likely that ethnic and cultural identity will play a significant role in shaping the ways in which Pacific learners understand history. It is imperative that we develop a stronger understanding of how concepts such as identity, alongside other sociocultural factors, impact the ways in which Pacific learners make meaning of history as taught.

Research into the experiences of Pacific learners and history education in New Zealand

The literature regarding Pacific learners' understanding of history in the New Zealand classroom is limited at best. Reymer (2012a, 2012b) provides us with the only specific study into the Pacific learners' perspectives on the studying of history. Her smaller scale study took place during 2010 at McAuley High School where the research for this thesis also took place. The Masters study utilised a questionnaire and two talanoa (a Pacific style focus group interview) to explore the experiences of Pacific learners and the enacted history curriculum. The significant differences between Reymer's study and my own will be discussed after an exploration of the key themes that arose from her research.

The role that identity plays in shaping students' perspectives of history underpins Reymer's study. Reymer (2012a) argues that "our student's identities affect their classroom and educational experiences. The understanding students bring with them into the classroom creates the lens through which they experience their history education" (p.62). Reymer (2012a) argues that the experiences of the students revealed a Pasifika sense of history that is underpinned by a sense of the personal. For the students involved in the study, "learning history was synonymous with the past, the deeds of ancestors and tradition" (p.67).

Underpinning this Pasifika understanding of history is also the concepts of respect and tradition. It is this sense of the personal that Reymer believes could be employed by the teacher in order to trigger an emotion response from students to the contexts studied in class, arguing that this emotional response often results in increased engagement from students in the classroom. During the research, students spoke of sharing their new knowledge with their siblings and peers, and as a result Reymer (2012b) argues that triggering an emotional response to history in students "may encourage further self-reflection and self-imitated study" (p.111).

While Reymer (2012b) explores how an identity lens shapes the experiences of Pacific learners in the history classroom, she also considers how learning particular history can contribute to identity formation through discussions of the experience of learning about the Samoan Mau movement. Participants in the study cited this experience in the classroom as having special significance to them. For many of the Samoan students it "helped to define and clarify part of their identities" (Reymer, 2012b, p.35). Reymer (2012b) argues that it was this personal link to the history being studied in class that led to "a heightened learning experience and awareness" (p.35). The inclusion of a unit on the Samoan Mau movement meant that the students could see themselves in the "school's picture" (Nakhid, 2002, p.6). The representation of themselves in the history curriculum of the school was valued by students. Study of the Mau movement also affirmed the identity of Samoan students who had otherwise felt that they were not "true Samoans" because they were New Zealand born and could not speak Samoan fluently. In this instance, learning about their history allowed students to "find a sense of belonging" and confidently self-identify as a Samoan (Reymer, 2012b, p.36).

However, although a personal sense of history underpins Pacific learners' understandings and experiences of history in the classroom, it does not limit student interest in history to the familiar. Pacific learners were able to see relevance in a wide range of historical contexts by connections with each "through their own lens of understanding" (Reymer, 2012b, p.67. The students relished the opportunity to travel beyond familiar worlds and "actively sought to make connections (often quite perceptively) between their own lives and the historical contexts they were studying" (Reymer, 2012b, p.111). Reymer (2012b) argues that by recognising and valuing the cultural lens through which Pacific learners view complex historical knowledge, we can create teaching and learning environments that support a high degrees of student engagement and achievement.

Reymer (2012a) explores student reflections on their learning and the purpose of doing history through conversation. Her study offers a springboard for further research into Pacific learners' understanding of history as taught in the New Zealand classroom. The depth of the student was appropriate for a master's level thesis and draws primarily on theory surrounding identity formation. The study does not, however, consider how the students' ways of understanding history impacts the choices that they make in the classroom as a result. The thesis also leaves room for a wider exploration of the social justice implications of the current history curriculum and the structural bias inherent in it which leads to inequitable outcomes for Pacific learners.

This thesis is quantifiably different in terms of the critical theory approach it takes in seeking to understand the ways in which Pacific learners understand history as constructed and contested. It consists of deep engagement with a range of textual data which was collected over multiple years and cohorts of students. I undertook this study because I was interested in uncovering the power relations that underpinned Pacific learners' understandings of history and the social justice implications of these for transformative education. In particular, I wanted to explore how student understanding of history influenced the choices that students made in the classroom and consider what those choices reveal about their interpretative framework and wider societal power relations in New Zealand. Reymer (2012a, 2012b) stops short of adopting this critical theory approach in her study, revealing a gap in the current literature available concerning Pacific learners and their understanding of history in the New Zealand classroom.

Summary

This chapter has canvassed the extant literature that explores how students make sense of history as taught in the classroom in both the international and domestic context. It highlights the significant role that ethnic and cultural identity plays in shaping the interpretive framework of students and considers the ways in which national narratives shape the history students encounter in the classroom. This chapter discussed the complex, and at times problematic, role that identity can play in the classroom, particularly where students perceptions of their own identity conflict with the identities allocated to them by their teachers. In the New Zealand context, and with specific relation to Pacific leaners, erroneous teacher perceptions of ethnic identity can lead to deficit thinking and low expectations of

Pacific learners resulting in inequitable educational outcomes. It argues that, despite their growing numbers, New Zealand's education system continues to underserve Pacific learners and that a large gap in the literature exists with regards to our understanding of the ways in which Pacific learners make sense of history in the New Zealand classroom, and the possible social justice implications of that lack of understanding. The following chapter establishes the theoretical framework of this study which seeks to redress the lack of research in this area.

Chapter Four: Theoretical Framework

Introduction

This study investigates the ways in which the participants, predominantly Pacific learners, understand history as constructed and contested. It intends to use these understandings to shed light on the interpretive framework of the participants, and the ways in which they engage with, and respond to, the historical knowledge they encounter in the classroom. The thesis will then explore the implications of these findings for social justice outcomes in history education. The theoretical framework for this study has its beginnings in social constructionism. This perspective has informed both my practice in the classroom and the scope and direction of the research project. However, as the research progressed and issues of power, domination and social justice came to the fore, it became clear that while social constructionism provided me with an ontological and epistemological viewpoint, its application within a social justice context was limited. I subsequently found that critical theory provided me with an ethical stance that ensured both the teaching and research I constructed would have a focus on social justice outcomes. As a result, critical theory, and in particular Giroux's (1983a, 1983b, 2003, 2011) work on critical pedagogy and resistance theory, became an explanatory framework, underpinned by social justice values, that would allow me to explore the interpretive frameworks of the participants, their responses to historical knowledge and the implications of their responses for pedagogical transformation.

This chapter provides an overview of the theoretical framework that underpins the study. It will begin by explaining how social constructionism initially shaped the research project and my own ontological view. It will then move into a discussion of critical theory and the work of Giroux, in order to explore issues of power and domination within this educational context. This chapter will explain how Giroux's work on critical pedagogy and resistance theory acts as an explanatory framework through which the findings of the research are discussed.

The social constructionist underpinnings of the research

Jaramillo (1996) argues that "the teaching strategies and curricula educators adopt implicitly reflect the learning theories they advocate" (p.134). Therefore, in order to understand the theoretical choices made during this study, it is necessary to be explicit about my own ontological views and the ways in which they have shaped the research project. I am a

middle class, Pākehā woman who has spent the majority of her career teaching in a Catholic girl's school located in a low socioeconomic area of Auckland. My students are predominantly Pacific learners. My interaction with them and their culture has significantly shaped my pedagogy. When I reflect on the learning theories I advocate through the teaching and learning strategies I practice in my classroom, it is evident that I see the world as subjective. My teaching practice reflects my belief that reality is a construction, socially and historically influenced by culture, events and people. In this chapter, I draw heavily on the work of Burr (2003) in order to define the social constructionist theory which underpins both my teaching practice and guides my research. As a teacher and researcher, I believe that "the ways we understand the world… are historically and culturally specific" (Burr, 2003, p.3). This belief influences my pedagogy. I employ collaborative teaching and learning activities which often ask students to critically interrogate historical texts, consider the ways in which they are constructed and how that construction impacts their usefulness and reliability. It also influences the ways in which I engage with the knowledge that my students bring to the classroom, and the recognition that the ways in which they engage with the teaching and learning they encounter in class may also be culturally specific. It was this belief, which was not always so clearly articulated in my teaching prior to undertaking this study, but was present nonetheless, that influenced my decision to investigate how students make sense of history as constructed and contested. As a result, the social constructionist ontology that structures my approach to teaching allows for the possibility that my students' interpretative frameworks may differ from mine and those of others. This social constructionist approach also influenced my decision to employ a critical sociocultural approach to researching history education. The relationship between the theoretical framework which shaped this research, and its influence on the methodological decisions made during the study, will be discussed later in the chapter.

Burr (2003) identifies two key theories of social constructionism, termed 'micro social constructionism' and 'macro social constructionism'. While the micro focuses "upon the micro structures of language use in interaction", the macro approach considers the. influences of "social structures in framing our social and psychological life" (Burr, 2003, p.19). Burr (2003) argues that:

> … our constructions of the world are therefore bound up in power relations because they have implications for what is permissible for different people to do and how they may treat others. (p.11)

Macro social constructionism, Burr (2003) argues, has “the concept of power at its core” and seeks to “analys[e] forms of social inequality, such as gender, race and ethnicity… with a view to challenging these through research and practice” (p.20). This focus on power relations and the influence of social structures on our lived experience opens the door to further consideration of the implications of a socially constructed world on issues of inequality. Burr (2003) states that “social constructionism insists that we take a critical stance toward our taken-for-granted ways of understanding the world”, however the application of Burr’s social constructionist theory to educational research, and in particular the specific investigation of power and education for social justice, is limited (p.9).

Critical theory for social justice outcomes

Social constructionism frames my worldview and influences the pedagogical stance that underpins my teaching practice. As I moved through my research however, it became clear that the issues of power and identity in the classroom raised by my participants could not be effectively addressed through the use of social constructionism alone. The minority status of my participants and the dominance of Western frameworks and thinking that underpinned history education in New Zealand, made it clear that social constructionism alone was not going to be adequate for the meaningful exploration of these themes in the thesis. While social constructionism recognises the constructed nature of reality, and macro social constructionism considers issues of power and inequality, reconciling a social constructionist approach to research with the use of critical theory as an explanatory framework allows for an exploration of the ways in which a socially constructed world advantages and disadvantages different groups of people. Critical theory, and in particular the work of Giroux (1983a, 1983b, 2003, 2011) on critical pedagogy and resistance theory, provides me with this ethical and pedagogical stance.

Critical theory was first used as a term to describe the work of the members of the Frankfurt School, established at the University of Frankfurt in 1923.Underpinning the work of the Frankfurt School was a “long tradition of German philosophical and social thought” including the work of Marx and Freud (Gibson, 1986, p.21). While members of the Frankfurt School differed markedly in many of their political theories, the core of their theoretical practice was a desire for a society that was socially just. As an epistemological lens, critical theory “argues that in human affairs all ‘facts’ are socially constructed, humanly determined and interpreted, hence subject to change through human needs” (Gibson, 1986, p.4). The

socially constructed nature of knowledge is further reiterated by Tripp (1992) who argues that:

> Rather than regarding knowledge as the culmination of subjectively neutral objectively verified facts, socially critical research sees knowledge as socially constructed and therefore artificial and held differently by different groups. It aims at understanding people's values and uses of their meanings rather than 'finding "the" truth'. (para. 5)

Furthermore, critical theorists argue that this social construction of knowledge almost always benefits the dominant group in society – those who hold power – which results in the oppression of the minority. Apple (2013) posits that "critical theory seeks to uncover *why* a particular form of social collectively exists, *how* it is maintained and *who* benefits from it" (p. 24). He believes that the education system is complicit in the reproduction of social and economic values that reinforce a particular "cultural and ideological hegemony" (Apple, 2013, p.23). Recognising that complicity is the first step towards challenging and transforming it. Critical theory is therefore, at its core, emancipatory in nature. For many this call to action is critical theory's greatest strength. Members of the Frankfurt school argued that greater social, political and economic equality "could only be achieved through *emancipation*, a process by which oppressed and exploited people become sufficiently *empowered* to transform their circumstances for themselves by themselves" (Tripp, 1992, para. 2). Gibson (1986) reiterates the importance of this ability of critical theory to be transformational, arguing that "critical theory is not simply explanatory, but it is committed to enabling change towards better relationships, towards a more just and rational society" (p.1). Critical theory enables this transformation to occur by challenging the underlying assumptions that structure society to the benefit of dominant, powerful groups. In an educational context, critical theory enables the critique of underlying assumptions and power relations that structure education institutions and pedagogical relationships. It asks researchers to question existing practice and "expose the ways in which the interested of dominant groups are maintained and reproduced at the expense of subordinate groups" (Coxon et al, 1994, p.10). Moreover, critical theory provides the opportunity for researchers and teachers alike to reimagine pedagogy in ways that will promote social justice outcomes.

Critical theory is therefore an empowering theoretical framework which can be employed to question and challenge the assumptions that underpin the teaching and learning of history in the New Zealand classroom. Coxon et al (1994) have argued that critical theory should be

employed within the New Zealand context in order to challenge the prevailing assumption that “universal, compulsory and secular education will lead to social equality and justice for all” when the evidence patently shows that particular sectors of our society do not enjoy social equality and justice in our education system (p.15). Critical theory can be used to reveal those assumptions that structure engagement with “priority learners”. The term “priority learners” is used in Ministry of Education documents to refer to “groups of students who have been identified as historically not experiencing success in the New Zealand schooling system. They include many Māori and Pacific learners, those from low socio-economic backgrounds, and students with special education needs” (Education Review Office, 2012, p.4). A critical theory stance requires that not only are these assumptions revealed and deconstructed, but that in doing so we are able to identify changes to the system that will result in the empowerment of those whom it currently oppresses.

The aim of research that employs critical theory is therefore to be transformative - not merely to ‘tinker around the edges’, but to fundamentally critique the assumptions that structure education and knowledge in their context and consider how those assumptions can be unsettled in order to emancipate those groups who are oppressed. This study seeks not only to critique the assumptions that underpin the teaching and learning of history in New Zealand classrooms, but also aims to explore the ways in which participants are empowered to transform their own circumstances through acts of resistance. It will do so through a critical interrogation of the interpretative framework of the participants, through a critical theory lens.

Theoretical underpinnings: Critical pedagogy and theories of resistance

In this study the work of critical theorist Henry Giroux guides the methodology undertaken to both conduct the research project and structure and interpret the research findings. Critical pedagogy is the application of critical theory principles to the classroom environment. In order to understand how Giroux acts as an explanatory framework for this study, the relationship between critical pedagogy and theories of resistance needs to be made explicit. Giroux first explored the notions of critical pedagogy and resistance theory in the early 1980s. In his words, Giroux (2003) wanted to:

> … reassert the fundamental political nature of teaching, the importance of linking pedagogy to social change, connecting critical learning to the experiences and

> histories that students brought to the classroom, and engaging in the space of schooling as a site of contestation, resistance and possibility. (p.6)

In this reflection on the purpose of his early writings, Giroux has succinctly highlighted the key principles that guide and structure this study. The rest of this chapter will unpack these key principles and their application to this research. It argues that this study will apply Giroux's theories of resistance to new contexts, thereby adding to the existing research in this field.

Schools as sites of struggle

Central to Giroux's work on critical pedagogy, is the unwavering belief that teaching is an inherently political act. Giroux (1983a) positions schools as sites of struggle which "represent areas of contestation among differentially empowered cultural and economic groups" (p.85). The characterisation of schools as inherently political sites, often complicit in the reproduction of the ideologies and values that benefit dominant groups, is in stark opposition to positivist discourse that schools are benign sites of educational instruction. Giroux (1983a, 2011) argues that pedagogy can play a key role in unsettling dominant assumptions and discourses that shape our education system and serve those who are in power. He believes that "schools establish the conditions under which some individuals and groups define the terms by which others live, resist, affirm and participate in the construction of their own identities and subjectivities" (Giroux, 1983a, p.101). The individuals who determine these terms are largely the white middle to upper classes, and it is their voices that are overwhelmingly privileged in the education system. For Giroux, the privileging of these voices leads to the oppression of marginalised groups who are frequently failed by the education system. Critical pedagogy, Giroux (2011) argues, draws attention "to those places and practices in which social agency has been denied and produced" (p.3).

Giroux's critical pedagogy not only provides an alternative to the positivist discourse that dominates educational policy in neo-liberal democracies, it also counters the fatalist discourse of radical educators who focus on critiquing schools as being complicit in the reproduction of dominant ideologies. Giroux argues that this focus on the "language of critique" is often made at the expense of recognising schools as "sites of possibility" (Giroux, 1983, p.85). Giroux contends that critique alone is not transformative or emancipatory, as it fails to allow for the possibility of resistance and hope. In response to the exclusion of a language of hope from these critiques, Giroux (2011) positions teachers and students as

“potential democratic agents of individual and social change” (p.5). Giroux’s conception of critical pedagogy assigns autonomy and agency to the students, teachers and even schools themselves. This aspect of Giroux’s theoretical framework draws heavily on Freire and his ‘Pedagogy of the Oppressed’ (2009). Freire (2009) was deeply opposed to a “banking concept of education” where the teacher “deposited” information into the minds of passive students readily waiting to learn and memorise information without critique (p.72). Freire explicitly rejected the notion of compliance that underpins this educational model. He argued that the teacher must facilitate a process of “conscientisation” in the classroom by problematising education so that students could critique the social environment in which they found themselves (Freire, 2009). This process of conscientisation would then allow for the empowerment and liberation of those oppressed. Conscientisation can be achieved through praxis which Freire (2009) defines as “reflection and action which truly transform reality” (p.100). Praxis requires teachers to learn from their students and “become jointly responsible for a process in which all grow” (2009, p.80). Freire (2009) argues that pedagogy which poses problems for students “involves a constant unveiling of reality” which enables the raising of consciousness and emancipates the learner in the classroom (p.81). This language of hope and empowerment articulated by Freire is a vital element of Giroux’s critical pedagogy which recognises schools as a site of struggle and argues that through the application of critical pedagogy, teachers and schools can create space in which the opportunity for resistance and the possibility of social change can occur.

Critical pedagogy in the classroom

Giroux (2011) outlines the trend over time in the United States context to de-skill teachers and treat pedagogy as ‘simply a set of strategies and skills to use in order to teach prespecified subject matter’ (p.4). His observations draw on Apple’s (2013) longstanding argument that patriarchal power relations have resulted in a desire to control a largely female teacher workforce through the production of tightly controlled and prescriptive curricular programmes that are in essence “teacher proof” (p.119). This attitude towards pedagogy supports an education system that seeks to reproduce the ideologies and values of the dominant group. In this context “pedagogy is largely reduced to a transmission model of teaching and limited to the propaganda of a culture of conformity and the passive absorption of knowledge” (Giroux, 2011, p.5). Conversely, the practical application of critical pedagogy in the classroom facilitates the opening of spaces where students work to “actively transform knowledge” (Giroux, 2011, p.7).

Giroux argues that as part of their practice, teachers have a responsibility to actively underpin their practice with the principles of critical pedagogy in the quest for emancipatory education. Giroux (2003) states:

> Schools could play a productive role in education students to think critically, take risks, and resist dominant forms of oppression as they shaped everyday classroom lives. Central to such an assumption was the demand to make the pedagogical political by identifying the link between learning and social transformation, provide the conditions for students to learn a range of critical capabilities in order to expand the possibilities of human agency and recover the role of teacher as an oppositional intellectual… (p.6)

Part of the process towards developing the ability of students to critically engage with issues of power is the use of pedagogical strategies that promote the active interrogation of 'texts', where students "actively transform knowledge rather than simply consume it" (Giroux, 2011, p.7). Ukpokodu (2009) argues "the primary aim of transformative pedagogy is to engender critical and reflective thinking, social consciousness, and engagement" (p.47). Pedagogies used in class need to provide space for transformation to occur by enabling students to critically reflect on their own interpretive frameworks, while also critically interrogating the texts and curriculum they are presented with in class. In doing so, students can transform knowledge, understanding it in different ways which may challenge dominant narratives and the status quo. Transformative practice, therefore, has the goal of transforming society. I argue that the discipline of history, as taught in the New Zealand context, is well placed to facilitate this transformation of knowledge and enact the principles of critical pedagogy. The teaching and learning guidelines for history in New Zealand explicitly state that effective history teaching should encourage students "to question accepted interpretations of the past and to consider contesting theories of historians and commentators" (Ministry of Education, 2010). New Zealand's open and unprescribed curriculum affords teachers the opportunity to select historical contexts that not only connect to the experiences of students but also promote critique of dominant ideologies and hegemony. Making space in the classroom for the interrogation of a range of different 'texts' to occur is a key principle of critical pedagogy and central in creating a space where resistance can occur.

Theories of reproduction and their limitations

Giroux (1983a) recognises that "schools function in the interest of the dominant society" and that theories of reproduction provide a valid critique of the conforming nature of school and

its role in ensuring the ideologies of dominant groups are reinforced "reproduc[ing] the social relations and attitudes needed to sustain the social division of labour necessary for the existing relations of production" (p.76). Giroux (1983a, 1983b) notes, however, that these theories of reproduction, including the work of Althusser (1971) and Bowles and Gintis (1976) oversimplify the mechanisms of power and afford too much of it to social reproduction. He argues that they are too deterministic in their approach, ignoring instances of opposition within schools and the "role that the cultural field of the school plays as a *mediating* force within the complex interplay of reproduction and resistance" (Giroux, 1983a, p.86). Giroux also levels a similar critique against theories of cultural reproduction (Bourdieu, 1977) which he argues afford little agency to subordinate groups and their attempts to reconstruct or alter the conditions in which they live and work (Giroux, 1983a, p.96). Theories of reproduction fail to recognise opposition within schools and the alternate ways in which students and teachers may interpret and give meaning to the knowledge presented to them on a daily basis. Theories of resistance therefore emerged as an attempt to "redefine the importance of power, ideology, and culture as central constructs for understanding complex relations between schooling and dominant society" (Giroux, 1983a, p.98). Resistance theory offers a window into the classroom, and the ways in which students and teachers navigate issues of power, ideology and culture.

Resistance theory as an explanatory framework

If critique alone is not transformative, and critical pedagogy recognises the potential of students to exercise agency and transform knowledge, students must be empowered to undertake acts of resistance which challenge dominant ideologies. Theories of resistance offer a way to study "the cultural field of the oppressed" and facilitate an analysis of the ways in which those groups partake in counter-hegemonic activity (Giroux, 1983a, p.101). In doing so, resistance theory can reveal where students and teachers enact their own agency in the classroom. Giroux recognises that resistance theory, in its application during the 1970s and early 1980s in particular, has limitations. A key critique Giroux (1983a) levels at these early studies is the lack of effort to address issues of gender and race. He argues that a focus on class oppression in resistance studies has resulted in an overwhelmingly patriarchal analysis, with very little attention applied to women or people of colour in such studies. As a result, these studies leave relatively little "theoretical room for exploring forms of resistance that are race – and gender – specific" (Giroux, 1983a, p.105). Giroux makes the case for an

academically rigorous approach to resistance studies which can inform the development of critical pedagogy.

Giroux's (1983b) other significant critique of resistance theory relevant to this thesis, is his belief that resistance theory has tended to "focus primarily on overt acts of rebellious student behaviour" (p.287). In making this point, Giroux (2003) strengthens the intellectual rigour of resistance theory by broadening the notion of what constitutes an act of resistance. He argues:

> It is crucial for educators to recognise that resistance is a multi-layered phenomenon that not only takes diverse and complex forms among students and teachers within schools but registers differently across different contexts and levels of political struggle. (Giroux, 2003, p.9)

Key to his understanding of resistance theory is the belief that not all oppositional behaviour is in fact an act of resistance. Resistance should, he believes, prompt "critical thinking and reflective action" (Giroux, 1983a, p.111). But more than this, Giroux argues acts of resistance should "contain[n] the possibility of galvanising collective political struggles around the issues of power and social determination" (Giroux, 1983a, p.111). Acts of resistance should, therefore, be more than just wilfully obstructive.

Giroux's (1983b) notion of "quietly subversive acts of resistance" is particularly pertinent to this study, which takes place within a context where overtly rebellious or obstructive acts of resistance were rare, and students enjoyed high levels of educational achievement (p.287). By broadening what constitutes an act of resistance to include those that are quietly subversive, Giroux (1983b) opens the door to acts of resistance that "have the potential to be politically progressive in the long run" (p.287). The opportunity exists to look for ways in which "students are resisting school ideology in a manner that gives them the power to reject the system on a level that will not make them powerless to protest it in the future" (Giroux, 1983b, p.288). In effect, students involved in quietly subversive acts of resistance may outwardly conform to the dominant school ideology but subvert it for their own means. In this way, the oppositional groups studied resist the trap of "contribut[ing] to their own failure" (Gibson, 1986 p.59).

Resistance theory and critical pedagogy are inherently linked. Resistance theory reveals the ways in which dominant ideologies control the curriculum, often at the expense of minority knowledge, and promote individuality at the expense of collectivism. Giroux (1983b) argues that "the basis for a new radical pedagogy must be drawn from a theoretically sophisticated

understanding that power, resistance and human agency can become central elements in the struggles for critical thinking and learning" (p.293). As educators, it is our responsibility to create space for "pockets of resistance" to occur in our classrooms. It is within these pockets that students can be empowered to undertake acts of resistance with the aim of emancipation. Theories of resistance, therefore, provide opportunities for practical pedagogical change in the classroom that can affect a social justice outcome and achieve "curricular justice" – the advent of teaching through which the pedagogy employed works to rectify inequality (Giroux, 2003, p.10).

Summary

Giroux's (1983a, 1983b, 2003, 2011) critical pedagogy and theories of resistance will guide the research process and analysis of findings. Resistance theory in particular will act as an explanatory framework employed to make sense of the acts of resistance taken by participants during the research process. Giroux articulates theories of resistance in a way that broadens the notion of resistance and affords agency to teachers and schools. Using theories of resistance as an explanatory framework to investigate the actions of students offers a nuanced, context specific examination of resistance and allows for a broader range of acts of resistance, specific to a particular context. The relationship between resistance theory and critical pedagogy also provides the opportunity for transformative pedagogical change. This study takes its lead from Giroux and employs the idea of resistance in a much more nuanced and agentic way. It will consider the ways in which the participants might undertake acts of resistance, situated within a body of knowledge, and their emancipatory power. It employs Giroux's theory of resistance to help make sense of the particular, and as a result will analyse the acts of resistance taken by students within their wider context. The following chapter will outline how critical pedagogy and resistance theory guided the methodological choices made during the research process.

Chapter Five: Methodology and Methods

Introduction

This chapter outlines the ways in which a critical pedagogy framework has influenced the methodological choices taken during the study. It discusses how those choices have been influenced by the need to ensure the research methods are culturally appropriate given the ethnic and cultural backgrounds of the participants. This chapter begins by explaining how a qualitative case study approach enables the research to align with the critical theory principles that underpin a critical pedagogy framework. The research design is then discussed in detail, with approaches to participant selection and data collection strategies outlined. Next, a detailed description of the pedagogical methods used with the participants is provided, including an overview of the historical contexts that structured the teaching and learning activities used in the research. This chapter concludes with an exploration of the culturally responsive methodologies used as part of the study and a discussion of the analytic techniques employed in the research.

Qualitative research

A qualitative case study approach to this research was chosen for both theoretical and methodological reasons. Chiefly, it enabled me “to uncover the lived reality or constructed meanings of research participants” (Mutch, 2013, p.45). Underpinning this thesis is the belief that knowledge is constructed and influenced by what the teacher and student both bring to the classroom. The critical sociocultural approach to history education championed by Epstein and Peck (2017) privileges a research and pedagogical framework that empowers researchers, teachers and students to recognise the exclusion of marginalised groups from the national narrative. This approach requires history educators and researchers to explore the ways in which concepts of power, identity and agency influence and shape not only the historical narratives students encounter in the classroom, but the ways in which the students themselves engage with that constructed and often contested knowledge. In this way, a critical sociocultural approach to history education and research aligns with, and reinforces, the principles of critical pedagogy which frame this study. A critical sociocultural approach emphasises empowering students to deconstruct dominant historical narratives. This emphasis parallels critical pedagogy’s own focus on promoting the interrogation of texts in

the classroom to “transform knowledge” so that it might become emancipatory (Giroux, 2011, p.7).

This study seeks to understand the interpretive framework of female, predominantly Pacific learners studying history in a New Zealand high school. In order to access and explore the interpretative frameworks of the participants, I needed to make methodological choices that not only aligned with both the principles of critical pedagogy and a critical sociocultural approach to history education, but that would also enable me to collect rich data from which I could draw meaningful conclusions. The study required in-depth data that could communicate the complexity of the issues being explored. This data needed to be gathered on site, in a context where the participants were comfortable sharing their worldview with me as the researcher.

Denzin and Lincoln (2005) argue that at their core “qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (p.3). Four key characteristics of qualitative research identified by Creswell (2009) stood out as clear justifications that supported the decision to employ qualitative methods in this study. Creswell (2009) recognises the importance of extended contact with the research participants in their natural setting, and notes the active role of qualitative researchers, who interpret the data collected to “make sense of it and organise it into categories” (p.175). Central to this interpretative role is the recognition that the interpretation of researchers “cannot be separated from their own backgrounds, history, context and prior understanding” (Creswell, 2009, p.176). While the role of the researcher may be active, it should also be cognisant of these biases and focus on “learning the meaning that the participants hold about the problem or issue, not the meaning that the researchers bring to the research or writers express in the literature” (Creswell, 2009, p.176). This focus on participant meaning is a core characteristic of qualitative research and privileges the voices of the participants over those of the researcher. This move away from “othering” the groups studied and placing the researcher’s own values on the data collected aligns with the social justice underpinnings of this study. It does, however, pose further questions about the role of the researcher in a qualitative study, especially where, in this context, the researcher is also a teacher of the participants involved. This aspect of the study will be discussed more fully later in the chapter.

Qualitative case study

The case study is a qualitative research strategy, although those employing a case study approach are not restricted to qualitative methods in the conduct of their research. Simons (2009) defines a case study as:

> An in-depth exploration from multiple perspectives of the complexity and uniqueness of a particular project, policy, institution or system in a "real life" context. It is research based, inclusive of different methods and is evidence led. (p.21)

A qualitative case study facilitates the "study of the singular" which can illuminate the complexity of a particular case and recognises subjective ways of knowing (Simons, 2014, p.458). Critical theory attempts to make sense of the particular. Giroux (2011) notes that critical pedagogy itself cannot be applied across contexts, but rather that it is "the outcome of particular struggles and is always related to the specificity of particular contexts, communities and available resources" (p.4). As "a phenomenon of some sort occurring in a bonded context", the bonded nature of the case study is particularly appropriate given the critical pedagogy framework which underpins this study (Punch, 2005, p.144). The qualitative case study is valuable for "an in-depth exploration from multiple perspectives of the complexity and uniqueness of a particular project, policy, institution or system in a 'real life' context" (Simons, 2009, p.21). The selection of a qualitative case study as a methodological choice places the experience of the participants at the core of the study and affords the opportunity to obtain an "in-depth view of the quality and complexity" of student understanding of history as constructed and contested in the unique bounded context of McAuley High School (Simons, 2014, p.458). It also allows for flexibility in terms of where and how data is collected, as well as providing an open timeframe for the study to occur within (Simons, 2014). This flexibility suited the needs of the classroom setting in which the research took place.

The decision to use the term 'Pacific learners' in this study

To reiterate, I will use the term 'Pacific learners' to refer to participants of Pacific Island descent collectively. In doing so, I acknowledge that this term can have the effect of homogenising the participants who hail from a range of Pacific Islands and cultures. A more detailed discussion of this issue occurs in chapter three of this thesis. For the purposes of this research, I am aligning the study with the terminology currently employed by Ministry of

Education documents developed by Pacific peoples as key stakeholders (Ministry of Education, 2018). Where previous researchers have employed the term ‘Pasifika’ to describe learners of Pacific Island decent, the term will be used in this thesis to discuss the context of those studies.

Research design

The research design of the study focused on the collection of qualitative data. I wanted to collect this data in the participants’ natural learning environment and largely as a result of the participants engaging in activities that would usually form part of the structure of their history teaching and learning programme at McAuley High School.

The data collection occurred in two phases in order to explore a range of participants across three different student cohorts and approximately 90 students. Phase one (August 2015) involved two teaching and learning activities conducted with both Year 12 (aged 16-17 years old) and Year 13 (aged 17-18 years old) history classes. Conducting these activities across two different curriculum year levels offered me the opportunity to consider student responses to contested histories in light of two different historical contexts (these contexts will be explained in further detail during this chapter). Phase two (July-August 2017) enabled me to revise the original research activities from phase one and investigate the interpretative frameworks of a larger cohort of Year 13 students. In both phases, I purposely restricted the study to participants who I taught as part of my usual teaching programme at McAuley High School. The cohorts from across both phases of the research were students with whom I had established trust, built on four to five years of teaching them both junior Social Studies and senior History at McAuley High School. Phase two also offered the opportunity to facilitate a talanoa (a Pacific style focus group interview) with a small number of students after the conclusion of the in-class activities. This talanoa provided depth and breadth of discussion related to the key ideas raised during the class discussions.

Site access/context

The case study took place at McAuley High School, as part of my professional role there as Teacher in Charge of History. McAuley High School is a Catholic girls’ secondary school, located in South Auckland, New Zealand. The school is highly respected both within the education community and the wider public. It has been consistently recognised for its strong academic achievement. In 2016, McAuley High School was the recipient of the Prime

Minister's Supreme Award for "Excellence in Education". Schools in New Zealand are currently categorised according to a decile ranking system based on the socio-economic status of the students attending. The lower the decile ranking of a school, the higher level of government funding it receives. McAuley High School is decile 1 with a high proportion of the students attending the school hailing from low socio-economic communities. The extent to which Pacific learners have been underserved by the New Zealand education system and the role of the decile rating system in perpetuating that inequality, has been discussed in some detail in chapter three. McAuley High School serves as a reminder that decile rating does not equate to a measure of quality. Salesa (2018) notes that McAuley High School "is a majority Pacific South Auckland girls' school with a consistent record of achievement" (p.71). The academic results of the school for NCEA sit above the national average and well above the average for Decile 1-3 schools. In 2017 66 percent of Level 3 students at McAuley High School achieved University Entrance qualifications, compared to 48 percent nationally and only 28 percent at similar schools rated decile 1-3. These high rates of achievement have seen the school experience significant roll growth over the last decade.

State-integrated schools are "schools within the State system of education which have a special character… usually of a religious nature" (Association of Proprietors of Integrated Schools, 2019, para 4). As a state-integrated Catholic school, students at McAuley High School are drawn from both the surrounding local community and further afield in South Auckland. The parents and caregivers of McAuley High School students have made a conscious decision to choose the school as a faith based educational environment for their girls. The student body are predominantly Pacific learners, with the majority of students identifying as Samoan (52%) and Tongan (25%), although many students will identify with more than one cultural group. 8 percent of students at McAuley High School identify as Māori.

Table 5.1

McAuley High School Student Ethnicity 2017

Ethnicity	Total (%)
Māori	8
Samoan	52
Tongan	25
Asian	6
Cook Island	3

Indian	2
Other Pacific	3
Other	1

History is an elective subject at McAuley High School and can be taken during Years 11 to 13. It is a popular subject choice at McAuley, which has resulted in there often being two history classes at each curriculum level since 2012. The Social Sciences Department was relocated to newly built classrooms in 2014. The classrooms were designed as modern learning environments, with large glass sliding doors that enable access to breakout spaces. Whiteboards run the length of the front and back of the classroom and are often used by students to brainstorm ideas or develop written work in groups. Students sit in self-selected groups of approximately 4-6 students and can access laptops stored in the classroom breakout space. The research occurred in these classrooms.

Participant selection

As the activities being used in the study were spread across approximately three to four teaching lessons, participation in the study varied from activity to activity and was dependent on students being present at school that day. Over half of those who participated in the research identified as Samoan (61.3%). Tongans were the second largest ethnic group represented in the study (28%). Only 3.2 percent of the participants in the study identified as Māori. This percentage was on par with the number of Indian and Middle Eastern students involved. The participants' ethnic identification was collated from the school's student management system.

It is important to note that many participants identified with multiple ethnic groups. The first ethnic group selected by participants and their families has been used as their primary ethnic identification. While this gives an indicative guide to the ethnic identification of the participants, the fluidity of identity may mean that the participants identified with different aspects of their ethnic or cultural identity at different points in the research. These complexities cannot be adequately communicated via table 5.2 below but do form part of the analysis of the qualitative data gathered from the participants themselves.

Table 5.2

Participant Student Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Number of students	Total (%)
Māori	3	3.2
Samoan	57	61.3
Tongan	26	28
Asian	0	0
Cook Island	0	0
Indian	3	3.2
Fijian	1	1.1
Middle Eastern	3	3.2

Data collection took place over two years in the school. The initial data collection took place in phase one (August 2015) and was conducted across two year levels - Year 12 and Year 13. This round of data collection focused on the written work of participants and collected two specific tasks that investigated student understanding of history as constructed and contested using contextualised sources. The aim of collecting this data set was to compare and contrast student understanding and experiences across two different curriculum levels and historical contexts. The teaching and learning activities completed by participants in their examination of the contested nature of history were not formally assessed and were reflective of the usual teaching and learning strategies experienced by students learning history at McAuley High School. All students in the class were invited to take part in the research. Approximately 4-6 students from each cohort chose not to participate in the research. These students were given the option of working on a similar self-directed task in the breakout space and were reassured that choosing not to take part would not have any adverse impact on their learning. Their decision not to participate in the research reassured me that I had communicated effectively the voluntary nature of the students' participation in the study.

In 2017, activity one, which was used with the first participant groups in 2015, was used again with two Year 13 history classes. The 2017 data resulted in the selection of specific students to participate in a more in-depth discussion of their view on history as constructed and contested via a talanoa conducted at the end of the task. This talanoa provided rich data which supplemented the written work provided by participants in class activities. A general

verbal invitation was made to the class to participate in the talanoa, the details of which were written on the classroom board. The participants who participated in the talanoa were self-selected. A majority of the participants who took part in the talanoa were members of the Year 13 scholarship history group that was also active during terms three and four. Scholarship history was run outside of usual class time and tutorials took place both after school and during lunchtime. Scholarship history at McAuley High School was open to any student who exhibited an interest in learning more about the discipline of history. As a result, the scholarship history group was also self-selected by students, and while many of the group were academically strong, there was a range of academic abilities represented within the talanoa. It is likely that students who were motivated enough to undertake a scholarship programme which ran outside of school time, were also more likely to want to be involved in a talanoa which would also require them to give up a lunch time at a particularly busy time in the school year. Initially I envisaged choosing the participants of the talanoa based on their written work in class, however this approach to the talanoa changed as my understanding of culturally responsive practice evolved. Giving the participants the choice to self-select for the talanoa enabled the participants to exercise agency within the research process and minimised any possible power imbalance between myself (as the teacher-researcher) and the participants. The use of the talanoa in the research process provided in-depth data which aided a deeper insight into the historical thinking of the participants. As a result of this depth of understanding, this study paints a nuanced picture of the interpretative frameworks of participants across multiple curriculum levels and student cohorts. The decision to use talanoa as a culturally appropriate data collection method to facilitate this part of the research process will be discussed in further detail later in the chapter.

Informed and voluntary consent

Permission from the Principal and Chair of the Board of Trustees was sought, and granted, for the research to take place at McAuley High School. Permission was also granted to use the name of McAuley High School in the study. All of the students involved in Year 12 or 13 history classes were invited to take part in the first data collection modes – this included in-class activities and any whole class discussion that resulted from the teaching and learning taking place. Each student was provided with a Participant Information Sheet that outlined the project and their potential involvement in it. All the potential participants were over the age of 16 and able to give their own informed consent, however all students were encouraged to share and discuss the Participant Information Sheet with their whānau/'aiga

(family). Students were aware the collection of data would take place during class time and that all work produced in class would be collected for analysis.

Anonymity

The participants were informed that all efforts would be made to protect their identities, including using pseudonyms in the final report. The participants were made aware that I could not guarantee total anonymity, as the name of the School would be used in the final report and some readers may guess through description the identity of participants.

Table 5.3 outlines the individual participants discussed in the thesis with relation to activity one. It sets out which group each participant belonged to and their pseudonym. Only the participants specifically referred to when discussing the data from activity one have been included in the table below (the activities completed by the participants will be detailed later in this chapter). Consequently, participants who contributed to activity two and the talanoa may not be listed. The 12 or 13 at the beginning of each group code denotes the year level (Year 12 or 13) that those participants belong to.

Table 5.3

Participant group names and members for activity one

Group Code	**Group members**
13A	Farah, Leilani, Carmel, Penelope
13B	Nisha, Catherine, Louise, Telesia
13C	Teuila, Andrea
13F	Angel, Charlotte
13G	Elisapeta, Salome, Amy
13H	Sara, Rachel, Rebecca
12B	Hannah, Ruth, Maria
12C	Caitlin, Alicia
12E	Tanya, Masina, Tupou
12F	Jennifer, Sefina

Storage of data

The data were collected through two methods - as written work and via audio-tape. The audio taped recordings will be kept until 1 August 2020 on a password protected hard drive. All consent forms have been stored in my office and will be kept for the next six years after which they will be destroyed manually and disposed of on-site.

Ethical considerations

This project received approval from the University of Auckland Ethics Committee in July 2015. The ethics approval process asked me to reflect on my role as a teacher-researcher and address the potential risks and benefits to the students who chose to either take part in, or exclude themselves from, the project. Mutch (2013) states that as “researchers are in a position of power” it is their responsibility to thoroughly explore and “understand the ethical implications of their research” (p.37). The position of power that a researcher occupies becomes especially potent when that researcher is also a participant’s teacher. Mutch (2013) highlights the concern that due to the everyday nature of collecting data on student achievement, teacher-researchers may fail to identify when that data collection ceases ‘being about ‘teaching and learning’ and starts becoming ‘research’” (p.76). As the participants’ teacher, I was in a dual position of trust. I was concerned that my students might feel that their academic achievement could be compromised by refusing to take part in the project. To resolve this conflict, I worked to the guiding principle that the teacher should act for the benefit of student learning at all times. The research project was designed specifically to ensure that the teaching and learning strategies used in the study were those usually experienced by students as they learn history at McAuley High School. The possible benefits of participating in the research project included the opportunity for participants to improve their understanding of history as contested and differentiate between simple and complex historical accounts. Developing this aspect of their historical thinking in more detail may have had a positive impact on their understanding of the discipline and could have resulted in improved internal and external assessment results. Aware of the power differential between myself and the students, and potential concerns around the coercion of students, I also ensured that students were aware they that could refuse to take part in the study or withdraw at any time without the risk of adverse consequences. Meaningful alternative teaching and learning activities were provided for, and taken up by, students who did not wish to take part in the study.

The researcher as both insider and outsider

Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1993) argue that:

> efforts to construct and codify a knowledge base for teaching have relied primarily on university-based research and have ignored the significant contributions of school-based teachers. (p.5)

They believe that teacher-led research can provide a unique and valuable perspective on teaching and learning that counters the “outside-in” research of university-based researchers (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993, p.7). However, the teacher-researcher occupies a contested space within the classroom. I have already noted the inherent power imbalance between student and teacher with regards to a student’s choice to participate in the study. In the context of this study, there is also the issue of a cultural divide.

Reymer’s (2012b) study of Pacific learners perspectives on studying history deals with similar issues regarding the dual role of the teacher as researcher. Like Reymer, who also conducted her research while she was a teacher at McAuley High School, I was an ‘insider’ at the School who had established relationships with the participants in the study. However, as their palagi teacher, and often the only palagi in the classroom, I was also an outsider. My role as the participants’ teacher no doubt influenced what information they were willing to share with me. It may also have influenced how they thought I wanted that information to be presented. I was concerned, especially going into the talanoa, that the participants might tell me what they thought I wanted to hear. While the recordings of student discussions in class demonstrate that the participants were aware that I would be listening to their responses, and at times they moderated them as a result, I believe the efforts I made to develop a culturally responsive framework to guide the research project helped to break down the teacher-student hierarchy that may have impeded meaningful discussion. My teaching practice has been heavily influenced by a focus on collaboration in the classroom and built on culturally responsive pedagogy that values positive and reciprocal learning relationships with my students. These relationships required a true sharing of power between myself and the students which allowed for the “dominant power differentials” that often characterise the teacher-student relationship to be broken down (Berryman, Lawrence & Lamont, 2018, p.9). I believe this focus was reflected in the willingness of the participants to engage in difficult conversations during the study. At times the participants were initially hesitant to discuss issues of race during the study, and in particular the talanoa, however previous work

conducted in class with students around the concept of white privilege and racism helped to provide touchstones to prompt students to share their thoughts without fear of reprisal or offence. While there are ethical concerns to be cognisant of when acting as a teacher-researcher, given the ethnic composition of my participants, my established relationship with students allowed for a more culturally responsive research process. The culturally responsive practice I had engaged in as teacher therefore led me to employ culturally responsive methodologies as a guide for my research project. These culturally responsive methodologies will be discussed further in the context of the data collection methods employed.

Qualitative data collection methods

A range of data collection methods allowed me, as the researcher, to explore how the participants engaged with, and made sense of historical knowledge. The data collection methods included student work and discussion completed in class, and a talanoa with a selection of students at the conclusion of the research project. This section will outline the different methods of data collection used during the study and the ways in which they align with a critical pedagogy approach in the classroom.

The data collected for this study centred around two key teaching and learning strategies that took place as part of the participants' usual history programmes at McAuley High School. These activities were completed during two units of work: a study of the development of the Samoan independence movement by Year 12 students, and an investigation into the My Lai massacre by Year 13 students. Before explaining the activities used in the study in detail it is important to outline the historical context in which the participants gave their responses to the activities completed in class. This next section will provide a brief overview of the two history units used in the study to explore contested perspectives of a historical event.

Historical context: The Mau movement

The Mau movement was studied by Year 12 students at McAuley High School during 2015. This unit focused on the development of a Samoan independence movement in response to New Zealand's colonial rule of Samoa from 1918-1965. The unit tracks New Zealand's occupation of Samoa at the beginning of World War One, its mismanagement of the 1919 Spanish Influenza epidemic which killed 25 percent of the Samoan population, and New

Zealand's increasingly paternalistic and authoritarian attempts to break down Fa'a Samoa (the Samoan way of life) throughout the 1920s and into the 1930s. In particular, the unit focuses on the events of Black Saturday where on 28 December 1929, 11 Samoans, including the Mau leader, Tupua Tamasese Lealofi III, were killed by members of the New Zealand police force as they welcomed home two members of the Mau who had been exiled from Samoa by the New Zealand Administration. An attempt to arrest a member of the Mau for tax evasion during the peaceful protest resulted in the outbreak of violence, during which one police officer was beaten to death. Three New Zealand policemen responded to the rioting crowds with lethal rifle fire. Soon after the Massacre, a coroner's report found that the New Zealand police were justified in their use of force against the unarmed protestors. The contested nature of the event, and New Zealand's response in its aftermath, continues to be debated by historians. Students were introduced to key individuals involved with the Mau movement. These ranged from supporters, such as Olaf Nelson, a prominent afakasi (half caste) businessman, and Tupua Tamasese Lealofi III, to George Richardson and Colonel Stephen Allen who both served as Administrators of Samoa during this period. As part of their assessment for this topic, students interpreted the perspectives of two different historical characters regarding the events on Black Saturday. The students explored the perspectives of those involved in the Black Saturday massacre through role play, drawing on their knowledge of the wider issues affecting Samoa at that time. They also examined the causes and consequences of the formation of the Mau, arguing that the Black Saturday massacre itself was a result of the group forming.

Historical context: The My Lai massacre

This unit of work was studied by Year 13 students and focuses on the causes and consequences of the My Lai massacre which occurred on 16 March 1968, while also providing some wider context for students around the massacre's place within the wider Vietnam War. During the My Lai massacre more than 500 unarmed civilians were killed by United States (US) soldiers who had been sent to the village on a Search and Destroy mission to locate members of the Viet Cong. Despite finding no evidence of the villages harbouring guerrilla fighters, members of Charlie Company, led by Lieutenant William Calley, embarked upon a four-hour killing spree which targeted women, children and elderly men. The Massacre, which included the rape and mutilation of young women, was covered up by the US Army for almost a year before being exposed by a soldier and veteran of the Vietnam War, Ron Ridenhour, resulting in the eventual court martial of William Calley for the murder

of 22 civilians at My Lai. William Calley was the only member of Charlie Company, and indeed the US Army, to be found guilty of murder at My Lai. He was sentenced to life imprisonment, although he only served 3.5 years under house arrest. The conviction of Calley was contested heavily at the time and remains contested to this day. Central to the contested nature of this event is the belief of some that Calley's actions in My Lai were reflective of wider issues regarding US military policy and tactics in My Lai. This argument rests on a belief that an emphasis on 'Search and Destroy' missions and the use of a 'body count' to measure success in battle created an environment where the murder of civilians was at best overlooked, at worst encouraged. In the aftermath of the court martial of Calley groups such as Vietnam Veterans Against the War argued that those higher up the chain of command should also be held accountable for what happened in the village of My Lai. Conversely, many others believed Calley had been unjustly convicted and that such incidents were unfortunate, but expected, casualties of war.

The My Lai massacre unit was used by the students to complete an internal assessment which required them to analyse different perspectives of a contested historical event. This requires students to dive deeply not only into the perspectives of those involved in the massacre at the time and their contemporaries, but also the perspectives of historians' writing at a later date. The students also used the topic to write an externally assessed essay which analysed the causes and consequences of the My Lai massacre, showing an understanding of their complexity and evaluating them as a historian would.

Classroom based activities

While the historical contexts the participants explored differed at each level, the activities used in the study to explore the ways in which the participants understood history as constructed and contested were the same. These activities are described in detail in table 5.4 below. Both teaching and learning strategies required students to engage with, and interrogate, primary and secondary sources. The participants were encouraged to question the historical perspectives and accepted interpretations of each event. Both activities asked students to act as historians themselves, reconciling and interpreting historical sources to construct their own narrative of the event. In this way, the activities used in this study drew on the principles of critical pedagogy and were specifically designed to promote the critical interrogation of historical texts, asking participants to actively transform the knowledge presented to them, rather than passively consuming it (Giroux, 2011, p.5).

Table 5.4

Description of teaching and learning activities undertaken during the research project

	Description of activity	Reasons for choosing this activity
Activity 1: Contextualised historical Sources	The participants read three different accounts of a historical event they have previously studied in pairs or groups of 3. Participants then discussed the accounts in pairs using the following questions as a guide, recording their responses on a chart: In what ways are the accounts similar? In what ways do the accounts differ from or contradict each other? Is each account historically valid? Why/why not? (you could consider here issues of reliability, bias, primary vs secondary sources, contestable vs non-contestable facts, multiple perspectives). Using the information they gathered from the different historical accounts, participants structured their own account of the event, deciding what information to include or exclude from their historical narrative.	This activity was included to explore how participants make sense of contested histories they have previously studied. Participants were familiar with the context and the key issues surrounding the contested nature of the topics explored. This activity allowed me to investigate how the participants interrogated historical texts and reconciled differences in historical perspectives or interpretations of historical events. The data provided from this activity enabled me to explore the ways in which the participants made sense of familiar contested histories.
Activity 2: Constructing a visual historical narrative	In groups of 3-4 participants were given a set of 10 photographs or visuals. Each visual was related to a cause or consequence from their external essay topic. Participants worked together to decide which visual related to the argument they	Based on Frost's (2000) museum activity (p.364-365) the purpose of the activity was to problematise history for participants and encourage them to consider the historian's role in the construction of history by 'doing history'

	want to construct in their essay. Participants selected and ordered the visuals according to the structure of their essay argument. Each participant chose a particular photograph/visual to write a caption for on a post-it note. The caption explained their key argument and how the visual they selected related to it. The researcher displayed each group's exhibit in sequential order on the wall, using the following questions to prompt discussion amongst participants: Where are the exhibits selection similar? Where do they differ? Which labels are most convincing and why? Participants answered the following reflective questions individually: How may you have been disadvantaged by your teacher choosing the visuals and photos in your pack? Which visuals or photographs do you wish were included/excluded in the pack and why? How would these different visuals change your essay plan? What does this activity tell you, if anything, about the ways historians might select and interpret history?	themselves. Participants were encouraged to select and order visual sources from a range provided in order to construct an argument (closely linked to an essay they need to prepare for external examination). This activity was intended to specifically explore how participants understand the role of the historian, teacher and historical narrative in the construction of historical knowledge.

Culturally responsive methodologies used in the study

Simons (2009) notes that qualitative research often employs a semi-structured interview approach. From the outset of this research project, I anticipated using some form of interview with my participants with the aim of accessing more in-depth data related to their understanding of history as constructed and contested. As 90 percent of my participants identified as Pacific learners, it was imperative that the research methods I employed in this study were culturally appropriate. I also needed to recognise that qualitative research, especially in the sociological and anthropological fields, has traditionally acted as a colonising force complicit in the 'othering' of indigenous groups. As stated by Denzin and Lincoln (2005) "in the colonial context, research becomes an objective way of representing the dark-skinned Other to the white world" (p.1). In undertaking this research project, I felt a strong sense of duty towards ensuring that the understanding of my participants, who were also my students, was represented as accurately as possible. In order to achieve this goal and ensure their ways of interpreting the world were communicated authentically, I needed to ensure the research process was guided by a culturally responsive framework which privileged the understandings of the participants. Schoenberger (1992) reinforces the role that the researcher's own identity plays in the qualitative research process when she states that "we are people doing research and that questions of gender, class, race, nationality, politics, history, and experience shape our research and interpretations of the world" (p.218). Recognising bias is not only essential when conducting qualitative research but also underpins the effective use of culturally responsive pedagogy in teaching practice, as recently articulated by the Ministry of Education. *Tapasā* (Ministry of Education, 2018) outlines a cultural competencies framework for non-Pacific teachers of Pacific learners. It has been developed to support the New Zealand government's *Pasifika Education Plan* (PEP) which aims to ensure "Pacific learners enjoy educational success as Pasifika" (Ministry of Education, 2018, p.3). Part of building cultural compentency in teaching practice requires engaging with culturally responsive "methodologies, theories and knowledge" (Ministry of Education, 2018, p.3). *Tapasā* (Ministry of Education, 2018) highlights the importance of non-Pacific teachers understanding:

> Their own distinctiveness, identity and cultures in deep and meaningful ways in order to genuinely engage and respond to the distinctive identities, languages, and cultures of others. The ability to reflect on the beliefs and ideas that are held within ones own culture, will enable teachers to recognisise their inbuilt assumptions (p.7).

This recognition of the cultural assumptions held by teachers mirrors the need for qualitative researchers to recognise their own biases in order for them to truly understand their participants' ways of knowing and understanding the problem being investigated. The qualitative research that takes place in this study is the result of intensive interactions which took place between the participants and I. Consequently, the research needed to be founded on relationships that engage with the participants in culturally responsive ways. Despite its colonising history, qualitative research can be culturally responsive and privilege the ways of knowing the participants, as long as teachers and researchers alike are cognisant of their own biases, in whatever form they take.

While *Tapasā* (Ministry of Education, 2018) is the most recent articulation of what cultural competency looks like in the classroom for New Zealand teachers, culturally responsive pedagogies already underpinned the data collection strategies which structure the study. Berryman, Lawrence and Lamont (2018) have defined culturally responsive pedagogy "as contexts for learning where power is shared, culture counts, leaning is interactive and dialogic, connectedness is fundamental to relations, there is a common vision of excellence for Māori in education" (p.5). While Berryman et al (2018) focus on culturally responsive pedagogy related to the teaching of Māori students, these characteristics mirror those identified by *Tapasā* (Ministry of Education, 2018) as characteristics of a good teacher of Pacific learners (Ministry of Education, 2018). The data collection activities used in the study were structured specifically to emulate the usual teaching and learning activities previously used in the classroom with students. The activities encouraged the sharing of power by teacher and students. The environment in which they took place was collaborative, and the participants were encouraged to interrogate texts and draw their own conclusions regarding their validity. Their contributions to class discussions were valued and the learning was interactive and dialogic, with participants expressing multiple points of view in a respectful classroom environment. During the study participants were encouraged to take risks and felt comfortable doing so in a classroom environment where this type of learning and pedagogy was the norm.

Talanoa as a culturally responsive methodology

As part of a culturally responsive approach to research, I also employed talanoa to engage with participants on a deeper level. Talanoa is defined as:

> A personal encounter where people story their issues, their realities and aspirations. It allows for more mo'oni (pure, real, authentic) information to be available for Pacific research than data derived from other research methods. (Vaioleti, 2006, p.21)

Talanoa is a Tongan word, however the concept of a "conversation, a talk, an exchange of ideas or thinking, whether formal or informal" cuts across the different Pacific Island cultures (Vaioleti, 2006, p.23). Vaioleti (2014) argues that talanoa results in a "levelling of power as the participant is enabled to share their "common sense" and the researcher can acknowledge this at the level (world/s) of the participant" (p.194). Talanoa is not just a method of data collection, but a methodology that "encompasses a practice method and the theoretical concepts used to enact that method, as well as the analysis of the information collected" (Fa'avae, Jones and Manu'atu, 2016, p.140). As such, there are different kinds of talanoa that may be employed by researchers. These different levels of talanoa can be engaged with by the researcher and participants in fluid ways. Fa'avae et al (2016) argue that effective use of talanoa as a methodology takes many years of understanding to master, noting that "conducting talanoa is a demanding task for any person, whether Tongan or not, researcher or not" (p.143). The decision to use talanoa in the research process was a result of my intention to conduct the research in a culturally responsive and respectful way.

Talanoa faka'eke'eke best describes the talanoa which took place during this study. Vaioleti (2014) likens this type of talanoa to an interview noting that "'eke implies the action of asking direct questions. Faka means the 'way of' and 'eke'eke implies verbal searching…" (p.201). A weakness of this kind of talanoa is that it can be dominated by the researcher and can be less personal in nature than other forms of talanoa. In order to mitigate the more formal aspects of talanoa faka'eke'eke, I let the culture of my students and the School guide the structure of talanoa. We began the talanoa with prayer and food, a common and expected ritual when beginning both formal and informal meetings at McAuley High School. Underpinning the talanoa which took place with the participants were five characteristics of behaviour identified by Vaioleti (2014), and summarised by Fa'avae et al (2016), as essential for effective talanoa:

> Fava ‘apa ‘apa (respectful, humble), anga lelei (tolerant, kind, calm), mateuteu (well-prepared, hard-working, culturally versed, professional), poto he anga (knowing what to do and doing it well), and ‘ofa fe’unga (showing appropriate compassion, empathy, love for the context). (Fa’avae et al, 2016, p.142)

I let these characteristics guide my approach to the talanoa and my classroom practice (both during the study and outside of it). I prepared a number of guiding questions to use in the talanoa, however there was no rigid structure to the discussion and I encouraged the participants to elaborate on areas of interest which they raised independently. The unstructured nature of talanoa was, at times, difficult to reconcile with my own Western worldview of how research should be conducted and my natural inclination as a teacher to guide students towards particular answers. I was determined to adhere to an unstructured framework but following the conclusion of the talanoa lamented that none of the questions I *thought* I wanted answered had been discussed in much detail. It was not until I later analysed the data that I realised the gift of authentic, insightful data that the participants had given me during the talanoa.

Talanoa as part of a critical pedagogy framework

Not only was talanoa a culturally appropriate methodology to employ for data collection in this study, it also aligned with the critical theory underpinnings of the research which emphasise social justice and recognise the constructed nature of knowledge. A critical pedagogy framework seeks to empower marginalised groups to interrogate texts and challenge dominant assumptions. Using talanoa as part of the data collection process provided students with a context that could effectively facilitate that interrogation and lead to participants challenging dominant assumptions that underpin the teaching and learning of history in New Zealand classrooms. The talanoa provided students with an appropriate forum through which they felt comfortable to raise ideas and issues which may not have been accessible otherwise.

Data analysis and interpretation

In order to analyse the qualitative data gathered in the project I used a thematic analysis approach. Rather than predetermining categories which the data is made to fit, thematic analysis allows the data itself to create categories through the “emergence of themes” (Mutch, 2013, p.164). In order to isolate the various themes that occurred throughout the

data, I used the constant comparative analysis approach outlined by LeCompte and Preissle (1993) and discussed in Mutch (2013). Central to this approach is coding the data collected to illuminate patterns and themes. These may be “repeated words, strong emotions, metaphors, images, emphasised items, key phrases, or significant concepts” (Mutch, 2013, p.164). Patton (2002) posits that “because each qualitative study is unique, the analytical approach will be unique” (p.433). Therefore, multiple coding methods may be adopted by a researcher in order to “capture the complex processes of phenomena in your data” (Saldana, 2013, p.47). The analysis for this research was conducted by assigning codes to the data. Those codes emerged from the data itself but were also informed by the theoretical framework that underpins the study.

Table 5.5

Codes which emerged from the data

Bias	Cross-referencing	Purpose
Multiple perspectives	Social justice	Use of evidence
Trust	Racial bias	Eurocentrism
Power imbalance	Construction of history	Relevance
Interest	Personal connection	Cultural understandings
Motivations	Identifying with history	Identity
Authority	Agency	Control
Barriers to agency	Vulnerability	Moral judgement

Table 5.6

Example of coding from data analysis

Transcript	**Open coding**
We always learn about Europe… I mean there is nothing wrong with it, it is just you need to be more aware…..	*Eurocentrism*
Minority perspectives, like when we learn something, I feel we should touch on the other side as well.	*Multiple perspectives*
… we have very limited My Lai perspectives because of how history has been constructed. It’s been like whitewashed to a certain extent	*Construction of history* *Eurocentrism* *Power imbalance*
People write in favour of themselves	*Bias*

When we picked the images we thought were most important, it was like we were historians interpreting the My Lai Massacre and then picking what side we believed suited the most.	*Agency* *Construction of history*

Once coding occurred the comparing and contrasting of participant data took place to see where similarities and differences lay within the data, and how these similarities and differences may have impacted the possible categories and sub-categories emerging from the data. This grouping of the coded data into themes required "interpretation and reflection on meaning" and resulted in the construction of three key themes in which the data fits (Richards, 2015, p,135). Once these themes were identified, I analysed "complex theme connections", looking for instances where the coded data overlapped or connected across the different themes (Creswell, 2009, p.187). These connections across the themes led to the development of a conceptual diagram which structures the final interpretation of the data. It is through a thematic approach that I responded to the thoughts and reflections of the participants regarding the constructed and contested nature of history. This type of analysis allows the data to 'speak for itself' rather than fitting student understandings to predetermined categories or notions.

Trustworthiness and rigour of the findings

Merriam and Tisdell (2016) state that "ensuring validity and reliability in qualitative research involves conducting the investigation in an ethical manner" (p.237). I employed a range of strategies to ensure the methodological rigor of the study. Ethical considerations have been at the forefront of this study and have centred around ensuring the dual role of the teacher-researcher has been managed in an ethical manner. The use of culturally responsive methodologies in the study has contributed to the ethical underpinnings of the research.

Discussions around ensuring the validity or reliability of qualitative research are contested terrain. Qualitative research investigates "people's constructions of reality – how they understand the world". As such, the world will be constructed by different people in different ways (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p.243). Merriam and Tisdell (2016) argue that "the standards for rigor in qualitative research necessarily differ from those of quantitative research" (p.237). They chose to primarily use the terms 'trustworthiness' and 'rigor' to assess the credibility of qualitative data. They argue that qualitative studies need to provide a level of interpretation

to the reader for the findings of the research to ring true. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) outline several strategies that can be used to increase the trustworthiness of qualitative research. Of relevance to this study are the strategies of triangulation of data and open discussion of the researchers positions or reflexivity. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) argue that triangulation "is a powerful strategy for increasing the credibility or internal validity of your research" (p.245). I collected multiple sources of data across three different student cohorts. These cohorts also spanned two different curriculum levels. Alongside these multiple sources of data, I also engaged in multiple methods of data collection. These included two different teaching and learning activities in which students submitted written responses, recordings of groups discussions in class and a talanoa. Similar themes emerged from all data sets included in the study, increasing my confidence in my analysis.

Open consideration of the researcher's active role in the research process is also highlighted by Merriam and Tisdell (2016) as essential to enabling the reader to understand the assumptions and biases which the researcher brings to the project. This may help "the reader to better understand how the individual researcher might have arrived at the particular interpretation of the data" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p.249). My position in this study has been discussed previously in this chapter. I have been open about any biases and assumptions that may have influenced my interpretation of the data in an effort to reassure readers of the credibility of the findings.

Alongside triangulation of data and recognition of my bias as the researcher, I also used analytic memos to help articulate my interpretations of the data. Analytic memos are of particular benefit when unexpected themes arise from the data being analysed (Cho & Trent, 2014, p.647). When used in conjunction with coding and categorising data, analytic memos allow "researchers to begin constructing new understandings and forming interpretations of the studied phenomenon" (Cho & Trent, 2014, p.649). Analytic memos also help to ensure that there is no "drift in the definition of codes", ensuring that the researcher is precise in his or her use of codes throughout the analysis of the data (Creswell, 2009, p. 190).

Summary

This chapter detailed the methodological choices made in the study. It outlined how a qualitative approach to the research allowed for the inclusion of methods that were both culturally appropriate to the context, while also aligned with the emancipatory principles that underpin the critical pedagogy framework of the study. The findings of the research have

been presented in the following three separate chapters. The presentation of these findings has deliberately privileged the words of the participants with the aim of empowering the voice of a group traditionally marginalised by the New Zealand education system.

Chapter Six: Findings: The Concept of Bias and Student Understanding of Contested Histories

Introduction

The following three chapters detail the findings from the in-class activities and student talanoa conducted during the case study. The chapters have been split into three themes which emerged from the data:

1) The role of the concept of bias in shaping student understanding of history

2) Student understanding of historical and pedagogical power, and

3) The different ways the participants identify with, and relate to, the history they encounter inside the classroom.

The majority of the data discussed in this chapter comes from activity one, which asked the participants to explore a range of sources on a contested historical event. During the activity the participants worked in groups to identify the similarities and differences in the accounts and then drew conclusions regarding the historical validity of each source. The participants were encouraged to consider "issues of reliability, bias, primary vs secondary sources, contestable vs non-contestable facts and multiple perspectives". The most prominent historical concept employed by the participants to assess the validity of a historical source or perspective was the concept of bias. This chapter finds that the participants involved in the research have an overarching concept of bias under which historical criteria, such as the inclusion of multiple perspectives, facts which can be cross-referenced and the motivations of historical actors, sit. This chapter argues that the existence or absence of these factors determines the bias, and therefore validity, of the source for participants, and contends that bias is perceived as inevitable by participants. It was acknowledged as part of the 'human condition' and even at times recognised as influencing their own consumption of history.

Bias as inherent in historical sources

The perceived validity of a source influences how the participants make sense of the contested event, whose narrative they find most trustworthy and reliable, and therefore which narrative they privilege in the construction of their own historical narrative of the event. While all of the participants use the concept of bias to underpin their evaluation of the validity

of a historical source, there was a range in the level of sophistication through which that evaluation occurs.

During the talanoa I asked the participants to consider what it means when we say that history can be contested. For Nisha, contested history meant:

> different perspectives and how people write history, like they write it according to their own bias and perspectives so you would never get the same story from everyone. So something, an event being contested for me, that is like there is more than one side to it and to understand it fully you need to see every side's perspective as a whole.

Applying Nisha's definition, history is, by its very nature, always contested. Nisha's description of contested history encompasses many of the key historical concepts that participants in the research use to make judgements regarding the validity and trustworthiness of historical sources. She believes that bias is inherent in any historical narrative and that there is always more than one perspective or side to a historical event.

Penelope supports the idea of bias as inherent or inevitable by stating "[i]t's hard because you have to, like you are always going to have like bias, no matter how neutral you come across or you try to come across you are always going to have a bias". However, unlike Penelope, who is struggling to see anyway around the issue of bias in history, Nisha provides us with what she sees as an antidote towards countering bias in historical narratives. She argues that including a range of perspectives in a historical account is one way we can begin to piece together a fuller narrative.

Inclusion and exclusion of multiple perspectives from historical narratives and bias

The ideas expressed by Nisha and Penelope in the talanoa are borne out in the responses of participants to activity one. The inclusion or exclusion of multiple perspectives from a historical narrative played a significant role in determining the validity of the historical sources, and in particular the existence of any bias. These ideas were expressed most strongly by the Year 12 participants dealing with secondary sources regarding Black Saturday, however they are also reflected in the Year 13 participants attempts to grapple with primary source accounts of the My Lai massacre.

When considering the validity of three sources related to the events of Black Saturday, Masina began by noting that "[a]ll three accounts had different writers. One account was the perspective of a Samoan, the other was a historian and one was from the Army, so to deal with this conflict, I tried to look at it from all different perspectives without being biased…". Masina was attempting to check her own bias towards the event, by carefully considering multiple perspectives on it in order to try and draw an unbiased conclusion on the event.

The inclusion of multiple perspectives in a historical narrative is also equated with being fair and balanced by two groups of participants. When assessing the source 'Aftermath' written by Michael Field, Group 12F stated "[i]n this account there is a balance of both perspectives (Samoa and New Zealand). It contains non-contestable facts in regard to the influenza pandemic 1918. Included also, is specific facts about the happenings of Black Saturday and how many were injured or found deceased". For Group 12F the inclusion of both Samoan and New Zealand perspectives, coupled with verifiable and specific facts, gave the account credibility. This focus on fairness and balance is also mirrored by Group 12B who also believe that "[a]ftermath is not bias because it talks about both perspectives, it doesn't side with either the Admin or the Mau, it just states facts and it's a fair source".

The inclusion of multiple perspectives was also clearly a significant factor for Year 13 students deciding which source about My Lai was more convincing. Leilani "decided which source was more convincing by looking at the time each source was written, whether it was primary or secondary, who wrote it and the purpose of it". She concluded that "[f]rom my point of view, the more convincing arguments tended to be the ones which had a neutral stance as it presents BOTH sides of the argument". Leilani employed a number of historical conventions to judge the validity of the sources, such as authorship and purpose. However, ultimately what makes the source most convincing is not the author or the purpose of the documents but the inclusion of *both* sides of the argument. The inclusion of multiple perspectives in a source leads this student to believe the source is neutral, and therefore unbiased (making it more credible). This belief is mirrored in comments from other Year 13 students who argue that Ridenhour is "not bias… he looks at the Massacre from multiple points of view and isn't one sided". In fact, Leilani makes the point that the inclusion of "different perspectives" in Ridenhour's account of the massacre at My Lai is highly significant given "his position being a GI which could have led him to siding with the Government and Nixon". Leilani concludes that the inclusion of multiple perspectives allowed Ridenhour to 'check' his bias. Students identify the inclusion of multiple perspectives in historical narratives as a clear indicator of a lack of bias on the part of the author. Likewise a singular

focus on one perspective indicates to students that bias is present. Group 12E argue “all the sources are bias because they only explain their perspectives instead of mentioning others”, in particular this group highlights the source from the Army Museum website which they identify as “biased, only gives the perspectives supporting Colonel Allen”. Tupou attributes contradictions between different sources explicitly to ‘bias’ contending that “yes, some of the histories contradicted each other as they were biased, and only saw it from the one perspective of one person who was there, rather than looking at the whole picture”

A more nuanced approach towards the exclusion of multiple narratives was taken by group 12D who identified possible bias in one of the sources, but sought to confirm it through the use of cross-referencing:

> It seems like it is biased because it’s found on a NZ site and may not have any Samoan perspectives therefore we should find information and text from Samoans to see if the info on the NZ history site is valid.

Motivation and bias

For Year 12 students, the validity of a particular historical source largely rests on the inclusion or exclusion of multiple perspectives in the secondary historical narratives they are exploring. For Year 13 students dealing with the validity of predominantly primary sources on the My Lai massacre, the validity of a historical source is inherently linked to the motivations of the historical actors involved. Year 13 students are much more comfortable exploring the motivations of active participants than historians when undertaking this activity. Sexias and Morton (2013) argue that considering the “position, motivation and purposes” of a historical character will allow for a sophisticated analysis of a source which requires “inference making – suggesting reasonable explanations by reading between the lines and linking to other period sources” (p.47). It is apparent that the participants in this study conflate the idea of bias with a historical character’s motivations or purpose. Historical characters with perceived self-interest were more likely to be found to be ‘biased’ by students. When weighing the validity of different perspectives on the My Lai massacre, Year 13 students discounted the perspectives of those who they believe have something to gain from history being presented in a particular way:

> This account is biased because President Nixon is justifying the actions of the American soldiers on the day of the My Lai massacre. This is a primary source that is not reliable because it is biased. Nixon is only defending his country and his army

> and he is also defending himself because he was the one who brought the war to Vietnam" (Group 13C).

Despite the obvious historical inaccuracy, these students have a very clear understanding that Nixon's position as President will impact how he presents the massacre to the public. Similar accusations are levelled by the same group at William Calley's account of the events at My Lai:

> This account is not valid because it is from William Calley and in this source he is trying everything to defend himself making it also biased and unreliable to use. William is also trying to justify his actions that he did on the day. This is also a primary source because it is from alley who was a key person on the day and it was still fresh in his mind (Group 13C).

The self-interest evident in both Nixon and Calley's perspectives therefore renders their historical accounts biased and consequently unreliable in the eyes of the students. This understanding was mirrored by other student groups, who go a step further in their analyses and provide clear examples of evidence that indicate to the reader the ways in which Nixon's bias is articulated in his historical narrative, reinforcing its lack of validity:

> President Nixon's perspective/account however is not convincing and is biased because he is trying to cover up the massacre. As a President he has a reputation to uphold and therefore he needs to protect it. Nixon tried to cover up the massacre saying it was an 'incident' which downplays how drastic the event was and when Nixon talks about the good things the soldiers had done, it seems as if he is trying to appeal to the public and cover up – saying all these good things outweigh this one 'incident' (Group 13F).

Group 13D, while acknowledging the fraught nature of Nixon's historical account, identify the usefulness that his perspective still serves as a window on the historical event, remarking that "his account is reliable in the fact that it provides a historian with his perspective. However, it is also biased because from his position his arguments were to protect the country" (Group 13D). This statement exhibits a level of nuance that is not found in previous discussions concerning the impact of Nixon's self-interest on the reliability or validity of his perspective. Group 13D recognise that this evidence is a reliable representation of Nixon's perspective on the event which could be useful to a historian, while still acknowledging its inherent bias. These examples demonstrate how perceived bias shapes student

understanding of the usefulness of a particular source or narrative, in both simplistic and sophisticated ways.

Countering this distrust among students towards those who have something to gain from portraying a historical event in a particular light, is the privilege students give to those who they perceive as motivated by a desire for social justice. These historical perspectives, or accounts, are likely to be considered more valid or believable even in spite of obvious bias. Historical actors identified as motivated by selfless actions or a desire for justice are perceived to be less biased and more believable by students. Year 13 students overwhelming found Ron Ridenhour's account of the My Lai massacre to be most valid. This validity was largely based on what was perceived by students as his selfless desire for justice and to 'expose the truth':

> This account is valid because it is from Ron Ridenhour's account and he was present on the day of the massacre. It is also from his account and the account of some of his friends. This is a primary source and we believe that it is reliable because there was no form of bias in his letter and he was the only one that came forward meaning that the event really affected him and he wanted justice to be served (Group 13C).

Despite Ridenhour taking accounts from his friends about what happened and the (incorrect) belief that he was there on the day, the students in this group firmly believe there was no bias at all in his account – even when allowing for his personal connection to the event. This lack of bias is attributed to the fact that "he wanted justice to be served". Ridenhour's desire for justice through the exposure of the Massacre renders his perspective unbiased for students. So, while bias has been perceived as problematic by students when assessing the validity of a historical source, in this case the existence of a possible bias is overlooked altogether in order to ensure the social justice aspect of the account can still inform the overarching narrative students ascribe to. The relationship between social justice and historical narrative is a powerful idea that I will come back to in chapter nine of this thesis.

Strengthening Ridenhour's credibility was also his willingness to go against the Army and Government, despite his position as an army insider. Charlotte argues that "Nixon's wasn't as believable for me due to his bias because of his position, whereas Ridenhour was more convincing as he questions his own government despite his position in the US military" (Group 13F). The Year 13 students clearly empathised with Ridenhour's goal of exposing the Massacre and its cover up. For them, his quest for justice provided him and his account of the My Lai massacre with credibility. His selfless motivations are also explicitly juxtaposed

against those of Nixon and Calley, with participants arguing that “Ridenhour speaks with the intention to inform and help the public see the truth, Nixon and Calley speak only to protect their reputations from the public” (Group 13E).

Reading beyond the page

Sexias and Morton (2013) contend that although the motivations of historical characters may not be clearly articulated, participants need to be able to read meanings that are not actually on the page” (Sexias & Morton, 2013, p.47). Participants taking part in this research consistently demonstrated an ability to ‘read beyond the page’. Group 13C argue that Ridenhour’s account is unbiased largely due to the fact that “he was the only one that came forward meaning that the event really affected him and he wanted justice to be served”. This group drew on their contextual knowledge of Ridenhour, and his role in the uncovering the Massacre, to form a conclusion regarding the validity and trustworthiness of his account. Likewise, when considering the reliability of Nixon’s perspective on the My Lai massacre, Group 13F focus on his use of the term, “incident” to describe the Massacre, linking it to previous readings and drawing conclusions as to why Nixon structures his historical narrative in this way:

> Nixon talks about the good things the soldiers had done, it seems as if he is trying to appeal to the public and cover up – saying all these good things outweigh this one ‘incident’.

Even when the motivations of historical actors are clearly articulated, Sexias and Morton (2013) argue that historians should be sceptical of taking them at face value. When analysing the sources participants also articulated this scepticism and the ability to read beyond the page by considering if Nixon’s perspective truly represents his feelings towards the My Lai massacre:

Catherine	I think we can’t really be sure that is the exact words.
Telesia	But then again you can’t really be sure this is Nixon’s perspective, like Sam said if he had a group of advisors behind him they are telling him one of his perspectives was totally different and he just did it because he’s the President and you can’t really do anything that is against the benefits of his country.

Catherine Like maybe he was wanting to take the blame, and say like ok this is American government's fault

Telesia Yeah because like everyone knew it was the Army's fault. Now that we are studying it from this perspective we think yes it's the Army's fault because of the body count, search and destroy and how they created that atmosphere, and I'm pretty sure they all knew that as well, but they were just trying to save their reputation.

The Year 13 students in this conversation are using their contextual knowledge of the event to evaluate historical narratives and consider "the conditions and world views prevalent at the time in question" (Sexias & Morton, 2013, p.47). Students in the group refer to the 'body count' - a tactic used by the US Army to measure success in battle and an incentive for American soldiers to kill Vietnamese civilians. By discussing the 'body count' when evaluating the validity of Nixon's perspective, participants are placing the source into context using their own knowledge and considering how the historical context may have impacted his perspective on the event.

Group 12A also used contextual knowledge in a rudimentary way when considering the context in which a biography of Colonel Stephen Allen was written by the Waiouru Army Museum. The students identified the need to be cautious of the document produced by the Museum as:

> the perspective is biased as it mainly focuses on his achievements and portrays Allen as a distinguished solider and leader. The account was written by the Army Museum where his family donated his medals. Therefore, we are able to justify that the perspective is biased as the museum would not write a critical perspective of Allen knowing that his family donated the medals to the museum.

There is a clear recognition by participants that the context in which Allen's medals were donated to the Army Museum would have shaped the construction of the text which accompanies his display. This concern is picked up by a second of group of participants who question the validity of the source arguing it was "biased as it was written by the army museum (he was part of the New Zealand army) – they described him as a good person and didn't mention the deaths of Samoans caused by Black Saturday" (Group 12C). The acknowledgment of the authorship and purpose of the source demonstrates a more sophisticated understanding of its limitations than those groups who discounted the source

as “not historically valid (biased) because it speaks in favour of Stephen Allen” (Group 12F) without further elaboration.

Cross-referencing to check for bias

The participants frequently use cross-referencing to confirm or negate the existence of bias in a text. Activity one prompted participants to look for similarities and differences between the sources in order to establish if a source was valid. These efforts at cross-referencing were at times simplistic – a listing of similar or different information from source to source. However, other examples of student work allowed for the exploration of how the participants understood their own bias.

The importance that participants place on the inclusion of multiple perspectives in historical narratives is evident from the way in which they cross-referenced the sources. Concerned that a source may be “biased because it’s found on a New Zealand site and may not have Samoan perspectives” Group 12D suggest that they “should find information and text from the Samoans to see if the info on the New Zealand history site is valid”. Corroborating sources is a strategy used by students at McAuley High School from Year 11 onwards in order to establish if the information in a source is reliable. Interestingly participants in the study did not only cross-reference sources against each other, but cross-referenced sources against their own knowledge. While this allowed participants to draw on their contextual knowledge to make sense of the event, it also often reinforced existing biases among the participants themselves. Masina found herself surprised by a Samoan perspective she encountered in the activity:

> One of the sources given that we had to look at, it was from a Samoan perspective and it was biased which is unusual for me studying this topic because most Samoans support the Mau whereas this person blamed Samoans for what went wrong.

Masina is working from the assumption that all Samoans supported the Mau movement, so when she came across a Samoan perspective which she perceives is anti-Mau, she dismisses it as biased. When the narrative of the perspective being described did not fit the student’s predetermined assumption around support for the Mau, Masina questioned the validity of the source, rather than reflecting on her own possible bias. Those assumptions resulted in the student developing a very surface level understanding of the source.

Using an existing understanding of the topic to determine the validity of a historical source was not unique to this student. The participants in Group 12F also argued that the Army Museum account "is not historically valid (biased) because it speaks in favour of Stephen Allen". Group 12F perceived the source as biased (and therefore not useful) because it was favourable to Allen. This favourable outlook did not conform to their existing understanding of Black Saturday. The perceived bias of the source was used by students as a reason to discount it and its usefulness, and the opportunity to consider what the source might tell us about attitudes towards Allen and his actions at Black Saturday was lost.

It was only in a discussion of bias during the talanoa that a particularly sophisticated Year 13 student began to consider the impact of her own bias on her consumption and engagement with history. When asked whether it was better for historians to say what their bias is before they start writing or to try and come across neutral, Nisha replied:

> We often don't know anything about them, but we judge them by their face I guess, if it's a white person writing it so they might have views… like you never know, maybe they don't have that bias and maybe they are actually very sympathetic to minority cultures but just because that's all you know about them we judge them in that way. So maybe they make it clear throughout their writing what they actually believe.

The existence of racial bias in the writing of history was not questioned by students during the talanoa and will be discussed in further detail when considering the role that race and power play in student understanding of history as constructed and contested. Interestingly, this statement by Nisha is the first acknowledgment that while historians may have a racial bias which presents itself in their construction of history, those who consume history may also have a bias. Nisha recognised her assumption that white historians may not be sympathetic to minority perspectives. She wanted historians to make what they believe clear from the outset so that readers can judge the work accordingly.

How understandings of bias impact the construction of their own historical narratives

This understanding of bias and focus on the need for multiple perspectives also informed how the participants construct their own historical narratives. When asked what they decided to include in their account of Black Saturday, Year 12 participant responses ranged from the content focused, such as Hannah who stated "that the Mau support managed to hide for four months even when they had trained marines looking for them", to those who demonstrated

an awareness of how they were constructing their historical narrative and the impact of the choices they made. This is explicitly outlined by Sefina who stated that when writing her own account of the event she "decided to include relevant information on Black Saturday and a brief explanation of how it led up to this day. And decided to leave out the biased opinions of some sources. Included balanced info on both New Zealand and Samoan perspectives".

The idea of utilising multiple narratives in the writing of history, and the role that this plays in establishing the validity of a historical source, is reiterated by Tanya who stated that her group:

> decided to include in our accounts the event of Black Saturday and what actually happened. The emotions and mental feelings that were expressed because of Tupua Tamasese's death including 10 other Mau leaders. We also included the perspectives of Colonel because we wanted our account to be valid.(Tanya)

Tanya clearly understands that for her history to be considered valid both perspectives on the event needed to be included, despite, or perhaps because of, Tanya's obvious sympathy towards the Mau perspective. A similar sentiment is expressed by Alicia who also decided to include "Colonel Allen's perspective that the Mau were to blame to make it less biased and speak of two perspectives than just one". Both Tanya and Alicia are using the inclusion of multiple perspectives in a historical narrative to counter the existing bias towards a pro-Mau perspective.

The desire to include multiple perspectives in a historical account in order to ensure the validity of the history presented was not limited to participant work on the Mau movement. In her writing of the My Lai massacre, Amy highlighted that she "decided to include the perspectives of President Nixon and Ron Ridenhour because their different perspectives helped to answer whether or not the massacre was an isolated event". By juxtaposing both perspectives Amy was able to draw a conclusion around who was most believable. In order to do this, Amy considered the motivations of the historical actors and how they might result in any bias. Ron Ridenhour was perceived as being the least biased, largely due to what the participants across the board perceived as his fight "for justice". Salome also included multiple perspectives in their account of the My Lai massacre in order to support her belief that "the massacre wasn't an isolated event". The desire to promote this interpretation to the reader, however, led the group to deliberately select particular historical evidence to support their argument:

> We left out a bit of Calley's perspective and Nixon's perspective because Ridenhour's perspective as to why he thought it wasn't an isolated event was much more convincing and had enough back up to justify his findings, unlike Nixon and Calley. (Group 13G)

This strong focus on the believability of Ridenhour and his account of the My Lai massacre throughout the research data rests largely on student belief that Ridenhour wanted to "expose the truth". His believability has been used by the participants to construct a historical narrative that would dispel the myth that My Lai was an isolated event. For this group of participants, including Ridenhour's "unbiased" account, and excluding aspects of both Nixon and Calley's perspectives, was essential in order to construct a historical narrative that represented a "fight for justice for the innocent".

Tensions around the concept of bias

The tension that exists between the problematic nature of bias and a social justice approach towards historical narratives discussed previously, is also reflected in a discussion of bias among students in the talanoa. Although the participants were very attuned to the idea of bias, during the talanoa they articulated a desire for historians to have a personal connection with the history they are writing about:

Researcher	How believable or trustworthy are historians?
Leilani	I guess it depends on who is writing it down.
Researcher	Does it depend on what type of history it is?
Nisha	Yes.
Penelope	Like, what do you mean by what type of history?
Researcher	Well, if I wrote you a history of Samoa, if I went to Samoa and studied it and all that sort of stuff would you trust my history of Samoa?
Group laughter	
Louise	Not really.
Leilani	To a certain extent…
Penelope	If you studied it…
Researcher	If I studied it yeah, do you think there are parts I might not understand?
	general agreement

Researcher	So do you think it matters who writes what history?
Louise	Yeah.
Nisha	In a way.
Researcher	It kind of gets back to what you were saying about Vietnam I think and My Lai right? And America might be really capable of writing… do you feel like an American could be really capable of writing the My Lai massacre and what happened there, but not so much getting the Vietnamese?
Penelope	I think we are more inclined to believe someone if they have a personal connection to it.
Researcher	So do you think that is important for history?
Penelope	Yeah, but like once again with like… bias, we have to be careful.

For the students this personal connection (despite being an indicator of bias in previous responses) does not necessarily result in an untrustworthy or invalid historical narrative, indeed it can strengthen it. For the participants involved in the talanoa the idea of me writing a history of Samoa was certainly humorous, and while they allowed that I might be able to write a trustworthy history if I studied it long enough, there was a healthy amount of scepticism that I would truly be able to understand all the facets of Samoa's history. A historian having a personal connection to an event is identified by Penelope as a key factor in its trustworthiness, and important in the writing of history. Penelope's desire for historians to have a personal connection to the history they write sits uneasily with her understanding of traditional concepts of historical bias as evidenced by her statement that "[y]eah but like once again with like bias, we have to be careful".

Summary

The participants employed a range of strategies and criteria in order to determine if a historical narrative is biased. At the conclusion of activity one, which required the participants to discuss three historical narratives concerned with the events that took place on Black Saturday in Apia, Samoa, Group 12B took part in the following discussion:

Maria	Yeah, do you think, like, historians are believable?
Ruth	Well, if they wrote the pieces, like fairly. If they took up both, sides then I guess I would
Maria	Yeah, but what if they write it from one side?

Hannah	Then it's biased
Ruth	Then I won't believe it
Maria	Yeah
Ruth	You don't trust it
Maria	I think if they gather information and what they say can be found in other ones it can be…
Hannah	Yeah, they have to back it up
Maria	Yeah, like resources. If they have resources then we can believe them because we can look at the resources and then…
Ruth	If they have like primary resources….

The exchange above encompasses the key steps taken by students in order to assess whether a historical source is valid and highlights the key historical concepts that underpin their understanding of what makes a historical narrative believable. There is a clear belief that a historical narrative must include multiple perspectives. The exclusion of multiple historical perspectives makes a source biased and therefore untrustworthy in the eyes of students. However, Group 12B also identify other criteria through which trustworthiness can be achieved on the part of the historian – the use of primary sources, or if their historical narrative can be corroborated by other sources. The criteria identified in this exchange is used by students throughout the research to establish the validity of historical sources related to a contested event. Not all of the students involved use all the criteria (multiple perspectives, corroboration, consideration of evidence used) at the same time, and many employ them with differing levels of sophistication, however it is clear that these key historical concepts underpin how students in this study explore contested histories, and shape their historical judgements. It is also evident that while bias structures much of their historical thinking when dealing with contested histories, there is a tension between the traditional concept of historical bias as understood by the participants, and their desire for histories that promote social justice and personal connection. The concept of bias, and in particular Eurocentric bias, is developed further in the following chapter to explore issues of historical and pedagogical power and their influence on the history participants encounter in the classroom.

Chapter Seven: Findings: Power and Student Understanding of Contested Histories

Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from the second theme which arose from the data collected both in-class and via the talanoa. It explores the ways in which the participants' understanding of power shapes their engagement with both the historical knowledge they encounter in the classroom and the pedagogical power of the teacher. The chapter begins with the participants' thoughts on the marginalisation of minority perspectives in historical narratives. This discussion is followed by a detailed exploration of the participants' understanding of the role that power plays in the decisions of historical actors and concludes with an exploration of pedagogical power through the eyes of the participants. It argues that the participants perceive issues of power as ubiquitous and that they exhibit a nuanced understanding of power imbalances in both history and the classroom itself.

Power and the marginalisation of minority perspectives

There is a clear belief among participants that power influences not only the actions of historical characters, but also the writing of history itself. Power is perceived by students as a struggle between the dominant European discourse and the marginalisation of minority perspectives. This struggle was articulated by the participants during the talanoa and discussed in both general terms, and with more specific reference to the My Lai massacre in particular. When asked whether they had thought about who writes or constructs our history, Penelope and Farah immediately highlighted what they saw as the Eurocentric framework which structures their experience of history taught in school:

Researcher	Yeah, have you thought about who writes our history or creates our history or constructs our history? Yeah? what are your thoughts on that?
Penelope	Depending on what type of history it is, it's usually like European men
Researcher	Yeah, is that how you feel like the history in school is sort of?
Group	Yeah (giggling)

Farah I think it's just what we've been taught I guess. Like um, I think it's very censored, like we don't learn about other issues in the world so basically black civil rights or, you know, Asian history or African history. We always learn about Europe and it is a little bit like… (nervous group laughter) I don't know, I mean there is nothing wrong with it, it is just you need to be more aware and a lot of people aren't aware that there are other events in history too basically.

Penelope quickly identifies European men in particular as constructing 'our' history, and in particular the history that they learn in school. There was a nervous, but strong consensus among students in the talanoa that they felt the history they studied in school was constructed from a European perspective. Farah articulates a belief that history has been "censored" in a way that the history of those outside of Europe has been excluded. While she adds that "there is nothing wrong with" learning about Europe, she believes that it's important to raise awareness of "other events in history too". It is clear that Farah feels these other events are being censored in order to privilege the teaching of European history in her school.

When asked what could be done to counter this Eurocentric bias, Nisha replies "minority perspectives, like when we learn something, I feel like we should touch on the other side as well". Nisha's desire to learn the "other side" of the story connects with the idea that "multiple perspectives" make a history valid expressed by students in the previous chapter. Nisha is very comfortable with the idea of multiplicity in the historical narratives she encounters – she expects to find it and sees the inclusion of minority perspectives as a marker of inclusive and socially just history.

The dominance of European/white perspectives continues as students discuss the marginalisation of minority perspectives in the history they have recently studied:

Nisha My Lai… I feel like we don't know anything about what happened to the Vietnamese people after it happened and like how they are dealing with it today or what there is, you know, are there any memorials or anything? I guess that side maybe the other perspective of the event.

Penelope I feel with that I feel like it touches base… it goes back to like what we were talking about who writes history? Like we have very limited My

Lai perspectives because of how history has been constructed. It's been, like, whitewashed to a certain extent.

Farah Like Penelope said, and even if the perspectives of the Vietnamese are like talked about like she said, it was whitewashed so you don't get the true feelings about it because you know how people write it they are from America so their bias is there. So, they could downplay a little bit of how they really feel.

Nisha Also, I think just touching on that, there is not enough written by actual Vietnamese people. So even if you were to study it there probably won't be like any resources that you can actually quote or back up your argument with or anything because there is mostly the American side of it.

Penelope And, do you think that will go back to like social economic stuff? That it like comes back to that? like talking about education… like the Vietnamese people are at a disadvantage.

Penelope draws attention to who writes history by noting the marginalisation of Vietnamese perspectives in the historical narrative and clearly attributing that marginalisation to "who writes history". Penelope and Farah's use of the term "whitewashed" in particular demonstrates the extent to which they believe a European perspective dominates the historical narrative and marginalises the voices of the minority. Farah highlights American bias as a factor that leads to historians downplaying Vietnamese perspectives "so you don't get their true feelings about it". Nisha surmises that a lack of Vietnamese perspectives on the event is because there is "not enough written by actual Vietnamese", an issue Penelope largely attributes to "like socioeconomic stuff, like it comes back to like talk about education like the Vietnamese people are at a disadvantage". In making these observations the participants are enacting Connell's (2014) Southern theory critique, articulating the way in which the imperial gaze has shaped the history they engaged with in class. For the participants involved in this exchange, the power of the dominant Eurocentric framework which shapes written history, and the imbalance of economic power between America and Vietnam, results in the marginalisation of Vietnamese, and privileging of Northern, perspectives in the classroom.

This imbalance of power between America and Vietnam is raised again in the talanoa when the participants are asked to consider why some perspectives might get left out of historical

accounts. The participants begin to consider how a dominant Western historical framework has resulted in the marginalisation of histories that do not fit with accepted historical norms:

Nisha What Penelope said before about social and economic disadvantages, like if you are talking about a large powerful nation like America and compared to a small country like Vietnam you would have less educated people from there and less historians and stuff. I think like what she said the less lack of education in some areas or even money or anything like that can actually contribute to how much history is being written, leading to perspectives being undermined.

Leilani Like history doesn't have to be written right? Because like I'm thinking about Pasifika and how our ancestors passed our history through oral history like telling stories. So… history doesn't necessarily have to be written? But then if it is written like it becomes… I don't know how to say it…

Penelope Like valid.

Nisha attributes the underrepresentation of minority perspectives in historical narratives to a lack of educational opportunity or resourcing in marginalised countries. Leilani clearly recognises that just because historical accounts are not written does not mean they do not exist. She draws on her understanding of how history is communicated in Pacific Island cultures and recognises the tension between what her culture values as historical record, and what Western civilisation recognises as valid history (defined in Western terms). Leilani's discussion of "valid" history highlights the tension between the participants' desire for a personal connection with history, as illustrated in the previous chapter, and the traditional Western historical thinking around bias. Oral history is recognised by the participants as a valuable way to combat the exclusion of minority perspectives from historical narratives, however often these oral histories are perceived as being less reliable in the dominant historical framework. This vignette demonstrates how the participants' threads of understanding are woven together to create a picture of history as constructed and contested. While some of those threads may pull against each other, they still belong to the whole.

These short interactions during the talanoa show that participants feel that European history dominates their history education at school and that the European perspective is privileged.

In the context of the My Lai massacre, this power imbalance plays out in the marginalisation of the Vietnamese perspective. Participants attribute this marginalisation to three factors:

1. American bias in the writing of history

2. A lack of economic resources in Vietnam which has resulted in less history being written (compared to America)

3. The privileging of written history over oral histories which further marginalises minority perspectives.

Power and the actions of historical characters

Participant awareness of power imbalances also manifest themselves in their analysis of the events that occurred at My Lai. An awareness of power, and the role it plays in the actions of historical characters, was communicated by a group of Year 13 participants working through activity one, which asked them to analyse a range of often conflicting sources regarding the events that happened at My Lai.

The notion of power being abused, or individual historical actors being powerless and easily manipulated, was articulated by participants as they discussed the role of William Calley in the My Lai massacre. When comparing and contrasting the contradictory accounts of President Nixon and William Calley, participants grappled with what they saw as the natural desire to believe someone who is more qualified or knowledgeable about a situation (Nixon) over someone who was perceived as less qualified (Calley):

Sara	I honestly don't know who to….
Rebecca	It is because for each perspective there is like good and bad.
Sara	Bad side to it.
Rachel	Yeah like would you rather believe someone like, for example ,your manager right. Would you rather them hire someone with the highest qualifications or someone with the lowest? No. You would want to go for Nixon, or would you rather go for Calley who is basically nothing? You know what I mean?
	I think you have got to think about Calley's perspective you see and it just outweighs Nixon completely because maybe because he is on top

he has got more power. He abused him and used him as a scapegoat, but then Calley's trying to defend himself and say "I didn't even do anything I was just following orders" and then you have this like controversy and then it is just like… oh gosh.

Yeah it always comes down to ourselves what we think of it and it is just like…

Rebecca Like there is no one that is innocent in this situation.

Rachel Yeah no one is innocent that's the one. Like Nixon doesn't say he's a scapegoat and he doesn't say he's not a scapegoat. He is neutral and is supporting the cover up.

Rachel and Rebecca ultimately find Calley and his account of what happened at My Lai more believable because of the power differential that exists between the two individuals. Nixon is perceived as being in a position of power, which then allows for the scapegoating of a relatively powerless William Calley. At times placing Calley in this powerless position leads the participants to paint him as a victim of the massacre too. Rachel argues that Nixon "abused him and used him as a scapegoat, but then he's trying to defend himself and say "I didn't even do anything I was just following orders…". Rebecca is, however, quick to remind Rachel of the moral ambiguity of the situation, and that no one involved escapes blame. Ultimately however, the participants perceive the relationship between Nixon and Calley as representative of a clear power imbalance. Further discussion of the subject leads Rachel to conclude that "it is pretty straightforward like someone at the top picking on someone at the bottom like bullying basically. It is obviously who is going to take it out, Nixon is going to take it out". Rachel equates Nixon's actions to bullying, again placing Calley in the role of the vulnerable victim, despite his actions on the day in victimising those more vulnerable than him.

The participants clearly struggle with the moral ambiguity of the actions of those involved in the massacre throughout their discussion. Calley is consistently portrayed by the participants as young and inexperienced:

Rebecca I don't see how this is Calley's fault, like he was trained and he was young.

Rachel Yeah, he was young.

Sara I get that it was because he was rushed through training because he was a drop out he has no experience. You know, from your personal experience when you are told to do something that you don't understand, you just do it without even thinking what it is, like, the purpose of it.

Rachel That is another thing eh, like training and bad leadership.

Sara The weakness in leadership.

Rachel Yeah training and bad leadership.

The participants start from a premise that Calley was young and inexperienced and that his decisions at My Lai stemmed from a lack of training and a willingness to follow orders even if he does not understand them. Despite knowing that Calley received inadequate training, and the structural issues that surrounded the recruitment of young, uneducated, working class men to fight in the Vietnam War, the students still struggle to reconcile how these factors could override the ability of soldiers such as Calley, to know right from wrong:

Rebecca It is bad leadership I reckon.

Rachel Yeah.

Rebecca Calley's young, and he's a drop out, he's unexperienced.

Rachel Calley's young, inexperienced.

Rebecca He is just doing what he's told, but then again Calley should have the brains to like, know the difference between right and wrong.

Rachel Yeah, I get you.

Sara They were just trying to like help one way or another…

Rachel Try to do something at the massacre to stop it! That is what should have happened.

Calley and his relative inexperience in the Army, and the actions he took, are also juxtaposed against Hugh Thompson, an experienced helicopter pilot who witnessed the massacre, reported the atrocities and evacuated a number of Vietnamese civilians from the village, thereby saving their lives. The participants explore the idea of inexperience further,

against the backdrop of a historical character who did do the right thing when faced with the massacre at My Lai:

Rebecca	He can't blame that he's young and he is inexperienced, like come on.
Rachel	Plus it's just unprofessional. He was like 25 and all the people they were recruiting were like between 17 and 35.
Rebecca	He is still young.
Sara	Whereas Thompson, he was like…
Rebecca	And come on, you grow up knowing the difference between right and wrong.
Rachel	But Hugh Thomson was a bit older that time so he would have understood everything.
Sara	And, he could make his own judgements, you know, he had the ability.
Rachel	But, everyone else was just so manipulated by them.
Sara	What would you call that? Like being manipulated by the ones like up above you?
Rebecca	Manipulation?
Rachel	Serving their country?
Rebecca	So much pride.
Rachel	Yeah, I know but sometimes you just like kind of abuse your power.

There is a tension among participants that age and inexperience should excuse Calley's actions – as Rebecca argues "and come on you grow up knowing the difference between right and wrong". The participants equate Thompson's ability to know right from wrong with his age and experience in the Army, which they believe gave him the ability to "make his own judgements". Everyone else who took part in the massacre is portrayed by the participants as being manipulated by those above them in a position of power. This is further reiterated by the same participants in their written account of the massacre where they argue:

> Calley's position was at stake and he was vulnerable, he was just afraid of what might happen to him if he didn't follow orders. In order for Calley to secure his position he had to follow orders from superiors above the rank from him. This would have made Calley more pressured and to impress his superiors. Calley was young, uneducated, unemployed, inexperienced and these were negative influences to his attitude. (Group 13H)

Calley is perceived by participants as being in a position of weakness which made his actions almost inevitable given the conditions, created by his superiors, in which he operated. The participants see his participation in the massacre as a result of the environment he was working in, and his lowly position in it.

The participants relate the power (or lack of) of a historical actor to the validity of their historical perspective. When asked whose perspective on what happened at My Lai they found the most convincing, the students chose Calley, initially because he was present at the massacre (unlike Nixon). However, as the participants dug deeper into their reasoning it becomes clear that issues of power have influenced their choice:

Rachel	Like Nixon, he was just in America probably just doing some stuff.
Rebecca	He wasn't actually fighting… a witness of what happened.
Rachel	Yeah, he still had full power and he just came in.
Researcher	What if I got you guys to think about the motivations behind someone's account on what happened on the day?
Rachel	So, if they got manipulated or something?
Researcher	Or what they have to gain from their accounts? Does that make sense? So, if you think about what Calley has to gain or lose, or what Nixon has to gain or lose and what Ridenhour has to gain or lose - would that change your choice?
Rachel	It makes it harder because you see Calley, he was for Nixon. It would have been like… if he had exploited the Massacre, he would have lost the support of his public, he would have lost trading.
Rebecca	Like economically.
Rachel	Yeah…

Sara His status.

Researcher Did you find it difficult to trust what he says? because he is obviously…

Rachel Yeah, he is so on top.

Rebecca He has a lot to lose.

Rachel But, what would he gain if he exposed the massacre anyway?

Rebecca Nothing. He has lost respect.

Nixon's position of power makes his account less valid for the students. Rebecca recognises that those with power want to maintain it and that Nixon was possibly at risk of losing support (and therefore power) over his handling of the Massacre. Rebecca, Rachel and Sara are all suspicious of Nixon's desire not to 'lose' power. This scepticism results in them being less likely to trust his account of the event.

Calley is consistently positioned by the participants in this group as lacking power and agency:

Researcher Why does it benefit Calley to argue that he was just following orders?

Rachel Because he couldn't do anything else, like that is all he had to do was follow orders… it is part of his role.

Rebecca His training.

Rachel Yeah and that is what he knows. That is the only thing he knows, and he knows that if he doesn't follow orders obviously something would go down.

Sara Were they paid to be in the US Army?

Researcher Yeah, you got paid to be in the Army.

Sara Because he was a drop out. You would say that was his only source of money? Like if he didn't follow orders sort of thing, he would have lost the money and couldn't provide for his family?

Researcher Like, he's a college dropout and now he is in a position of authority and important as well?

Rachel Yeah… he's fragile as well.

Through her discussion of Calley as a drop out and acknowledgement of the Army as his source of income, Sara also highlights the role of economic factors in decision making and their intersection with class. Calley was working class, uneducated and unemployed before entering the Army. Sara rightly points out that he is economically vulnerable too, and that this could have impacted his decision making.

Towards the end of the activity the students return to this idea of Calley's vulnerability. They continue to grapple with the moral ambiguity surrounding the actions of those at My Lai by placing Calley and his actions in the wider context of a national power struggle:

Sara You could say he lost the respect of other people, like he was hated.

Rachel He lost the respect of others, no not his troops.

Sara Calley was like…

Rebecca It is easy to back up information. Calley was vulnerable. He was just a little kid with no mind.

Rachel Well, let's go into something he could have done on the field.

Sara Calley could have stopped the killing.

Rachel So, if Calley had used…

Rebecca Were there older people in the army? But they were all the top? They were probably in America.

Sara But, they also had that, or whatever you call it… you know, how they recruited after 12 months? They recruited, like it just leaves the ones that had just got experience and you are bringing in ones that lack experience as well.

Yeah you could say they are using the vulnerable to do what they want.

Rachel Yeah, what you were saying also, because they were young… because Calley and his troops were young.

Sara You can also put in your own experience, how your parents, because you are young, and your parents… you have to listen to them… like

you can't argue even if they are wrong or right, you just have to do it sort of thing.

Yeah, I have that all the time.

Rebecca Us, like generation.

Sara And, then when you question what they are saying they are like "don't question me" like "I know better than you just do what I say" sort of thing. Exactly what Nixon was.

Sara clearly articulates that "they" recruited the vulnerable to get them to do what "they" wanted. There is a clear belief articulated that this mass murder is sanctioned, even encouraged, by those in positions of power and Calley is part of a machine which requires him to play a specific role – that he lacks agency. The participants link that power dynamic and lack of agency to their own experiences. Nixon and the US Government are given a parental role, while Calley is positioned in the role of child conditioned not to question those in authority.

Readiness on the part of participants to empathise with the underdog, while also being repulsed by his actions, demonstrates an ability to see nuance and power at play in the situation. This nuance at times prevents the participants from straight out dismissing Calley as 'evil' or a 'bad apple'. This nuance is also reinforced by Rachel who states that "there is not one person to entirely blame for the event". However, Rachel, Sara and Rebecca's discussion shows that attempting to understand the actions of Calley and judge the validity of his perspective, sits uneasily with the reality of the crimes he committed. The participants jump backwards and forwards between empathising with Calley while also condemning his actions. While the participants can understand the possible reasons for Calley's behaviour on an intellectual level, at an emotional level Rebecca illustrates the conflict participants are grappling with when she states, "and come on you grow up knowing the difference between right and wrong".

This focus on the power dynamics in the My Lai massacre, while discussed in detail by this particular group, is also highlighted in the writing of other Year 13 students exploring Calley's role in the massacre. There is an implicit recognition by other groups of the role of power in the actions taken by Calley during the massacre:

> Ridenhour's account also implies that this was not an isolated event as President Nixon publicly states, "I believe there were many such massacres during the course

> of the war… the specific act and responsibility of officers much further up the military food chain than Calley". Meaning that Calley was being used as a scapegoat for officers of a higher rank than him suggesting that this was not an isolated event as military officers higher than Calley would've been involved and responsible for orders and actions carried out during the My Lai massacre (Group 13F).

The participants quote Ridenhour who, in his own assessment of the My Lai massacre, squarely places the blame on the US Army and those higher up the military hierarchy. Identifying Calley as a scapegoat used by those in positions of power, articulates the notion of a power imbalance which sees Calley take the fall for the massacre. Group 13J also reiterate the idea that being in a position of weakness, combined with a lack of education and experience, led to Calley leading the massacre:

> He was doing what was told and expected to him with Medina calling the shots. Calley was inexperienced, being a young college dropout as this could have been a reason [for] the lack of knowledge he had …

Agency and power in the classroom

The ways in which participants choose to enact (or not) their agency in the classroom was illustrated by the data in two distinct but related ways. In the second activity the participants reflected on the role that the pedagogical power of the teacher plays in the classroom. During the second activity the participants were asked to construct a museum exhibit which explained the most significant cause of a historical event they had studied. The participants chose 3-4 visual sources from a range presented to them by the teacher. They ordered the visual sources (according to their overarching argument) and summarised how each visual related to a significant cause of their historical event. As part of the activity, participants were asked to reflect on the construction of historical narratives through the following questions:

1. How might you have been disadvantaged by your teacher choosing the visuals and photos in your pack?
2. Which visuals or photos do you wish were included in your pack and why?
3. How might these different visuals have changed your argument about the most significant cause?
4. What does this activity tell you, if anything, about the ways historians might select and interpret history?

Question one, regarding the role of the teacher in the selection of the visual sources included in the activity, yielded a variety of responses from students that spoke to issues of power and agency in the classroom. In particular, their responses shed light in how participants perceived the role of the teacher in the construction of learning, and how that role impacts on their ability to exercise agency in the classroom environment.

Some participants saw no disadvantage in having their teacher select the sources they used to construct their argument. Teuila saw teacher selection of the sources as "more of an advantage because my teacher has a lot of knowledge, more than myself to pick excellence [level] visuals and photos in my pack. I am able to trust that her selection of photos made my selection easier". Teuila was a student who achieved Excellence level grades regularly in history. The high level of trust Teuila had in her teacher's expert knowledge of the topic meant that she felt her ability to complete the activity was made easier, as she not only trusted her teacher but she could also trust the sources she was working with to be of excellence level.

The role of the teacher as the expert, or best placed to select the sources, was reiterated by Ruth who stated "I don't think it's a disadvantage to have the teacher choose the visuals and photos, I think it's actually helpful because as always the teacher knows best". Ruth places the teacher in a position of authority and power in the classroom. The idea of being able to "trust" the sources selected by the teacher was also reiterated by other students. Andrea made the point that she "was advantaged by my teacher choosing the visuals and photos because [she] knew that they were all relevant to the topic". Hannah builds on the idea that the visuals would be relevant if the teacher selected them by stating that "the advantage by my teacher picking out the photos was that I knew there was no wrong answer as I knew what photo I picked would have been correct". Teacher selection gave these students a feeling of comfort when completing the activity, as there was a safety net that helped to guarantee their success. The idea that the teacher always "knows best", articulated by Ruth, places the teacher uncritically in the role of expert. This lack of criticality means that Ruth does not reflect on the role of the teacher in the construction of learning and the ways in which the teacher may influence the direction in which her argument develops.

This uncritical acceptance of the teacher as an expert who is best placed to select the visuals used in the activity, is not subscribed to by all, or even a majority, of the students who took part in the research. However, the degree of sophistication in which students engage with the role of the teaching in constructing and influencing the learning outcomes in

the classroom varies considerably among both Year 12 and 13 students. At one end of the scale, three participants draw on a similar idea of the teacher as the expert, but begin to demonstrate an awareness that the actions of the teacher could have an impact on their agency in the classroom:

> My teacher choosing the images is a disadvantage because it creates a restriction with each picture… my teaching choosing the images can also be advantageous because she has more knowledge of the areas we have studied, her choosing images can help us focus on topics we know about. (Caitlin)

Caitlin privileges the knowledge of her teacher, but also recognises that by giving the teacher the power to choose the images from which they select their argument this "creates a restriction". While Caitlin does not elaborate on what that restriction might be, Mary articulates more clearly how the activity could be improved by giving students greater agency:

> There were no disadvantages. But it would be better and more challenging if the students went and picked out the photos to help them argue their point. (Mary)

Mary believes that having the ability to choose their own sources would provide more challenge and enable to students to argue *their* point. Alicia, however, is the first of the participants to consider that although the teacher "knows more about the Mau movement so we would get better visuals that would work well with what we needed to do – although she may be biased and so that could be a disadvantage because the visuals could be from a biased perspective". This recognition that the teacher herself may be biased, and that this bias could influence what visuals have been selected for participants, demonstrates a growing criticality of the role the teacher plays in the construction of knowledge and understanding in the classroom. Alicia demonstrates a nuanced understanding that while the expert knowledge of a teacher is an advantage, it could also have possible draw backs.

The idea of teacher bias articulated by Alicia, aligns with the views of participants who consider the role of a teacher's perspective on a historical event in the choice of visuals included in the pack. Charlotte and Angel both consider the role of perspective in the selection of sources, and recognise that their perspective may differ from their teachers:

> Because [they] may not be pictures we are familiar with and it is also from the teacher's perspective which could be different to ours. (Charlotte)

> This was a disadvantage because we didn't get to choose the photos and it wasn't from our perspective. (Angel)

By recognising that the photos chosen were not "from our perspective" Angel demonstrates glimmers of understanding that teacher selection of sources is in some way limiting their agency to make their own argument. Maddy, however, considers the impact of the teacher's perspective on her learning more explicitly by assessing the impact it could have on any argument she goes on to construct:

> I would have been disadvantaged because the teacher may have selected the images from one source, or a limited range of sources and they may not be good to base a fair argument on because they only show one perspective. (Maddy)

Like discussions of bias and perspective in the previous chapters, Maddy draws a link between the role of perspective on the choice of visuals selected, and how this impacts the validity of the sources selected by the teacher. She in turn considers how this limited perspective could impact any argument she makes. This concern is mirrored in a more subtle way by Marietta who also recognises that by selecting the visuals the teacher is steering participants towards developing an argument based around the teacher's perspective. When Marietta states that "it disadvantages me as it is her perspective in which I must make an argument based on" she is acknowledging that teacher perspective is seen as limiting her agency to develop her own argument.

A clearer articulation of agency comes from the participants who perceive the role of the teacher in selecting the sources from which they constructed their argument as problematic. For many participants the issue was not the trustworthiness (or not) of the sources selected, but the desire to enact their own agency and control over their learning. Participants exhibited a desire to "show" the extent of their knowledge to the teacher and class. This varied from participants who wanted to select their own visuals so that they could find "easier" ones that they could explain better than those selected by the teacher. Malia believed that teacher selection of the sources inhibited her understanding of the task, arguing that:

> By having our teacher choose the visuals and photos it would have disadvantaged us as the photos that she chose may have been difficult to understand whereas if we chose the photos ourselves, we would have been more likely to choose easier photos and visuals. (Malia)

Concerns around being able to understand the visuals selected by the teacher were also reiterated by other participants. Penelope believed she “was disadvantaged by the fact that there were other photos that we could have easily identified due to the fact that some of the photos were difficult to understand therefore if we chose the photos then we would have understood it more clearly”. For Penelope, teacher selection of the sources inhibited her ability to understand the task itself. If Penelope had the power to select photos she understood more clearly, she believes she would in turn, have had a better understanding of the activity itself. Jane goes further and argues that the level of difficulty participants encountered interpreting the sources selected by the teacher was part of the overall teaching and learning strategy. She argues that “she would have picked photos that were harder for us to interpret whereas if we picked the photos, we would have chosen photos that we could explain easily”. Whether Jane perceives this challenge as a good or bad thing is not made clear.

Luisa could, however, articulate how, by selecting the visuals, the teacher limited the opportunity of students to develop more complex and nuanced arguments that allowed them to demonstrate the totality of their understanding:

> Iould be a disadvantage for us since we as the students would have less of a choice to pick other sources that would fully show our understanding of a particular event. (Luisa)

For Luisa the lack of control she feels she has over her learning in this activity limits her ability to demonstrate her understanding of the event. Pania mirrors this concern by outlining how difficult she finds it being able to only work within the confines of the pictures supplied:

> It would be a disadvantage to me because they would be the only pictures supplied. So, if I were to find a picture hard to interpret or understand it would limit my ability to show how well I understood the question. (Pania)

In her response to question one, Carmel demonstrates a complex understanding of the event which she feels is not reflected in the visuals selected by the teacher.

> I might have been disadvantaged by the attitudes to war images that were not included because I could’ve elaborated more on how the attitudes shown by American soldiers brewed mistrust amongst Vietnamese and therefore was a major factor that contributed to the My Lai massacre. I wish photographs of American

> soldier's behaviour and Viet Cong tactics other than booby traps were included in the pack so that I could write about how each tactic linked together…. (Carmel)

Carmel wants the opportunity to be able to articulate that complex understanding in her museum narrative but finds herself hamstrung by the narrow nature of the images selected. Ana also recognises the limits imposed on her interpretation of the event:

> With the teacher choosing the visuals and not me, I feel like it was a disadvantage because in structuring a strong, convincing argument I will need to have selected the visuals I think match or support my understanding of the event. (Carmel)

Ana goes on to state in her response to question two that:

> The visuals I wish were included in the pact are photos of Viet Cong soldiers, as this will some understanding of what the VC has done to cause frustration amongst Americans and eventually lead to the killing of villagers. (Ana)

Like Carmel, Ana also wants to present a more complex and nuanced argument regarding the most significant cause of the massacre, and she finds the sources selected by her teacher inadequate to achieve this. Ana also recognises the need to select evidence to support her own argument and wants the power to be able to do so in order to actively play the part of the historian in this activity.

Carmel and Ana's discussion of how the teacher selection of sources has limited their agency demonstrates that they have a clear understanding of their roles as historians in this activity. They understand that they are selecting and interpreting evidence to build an argument, and that the actions of the teacher has restricted their ability to do this effectively.

A selection of participant responses demonstrated an understanding of how the actions of the teacher can steer student discussion in a particular direction and impinge on their agency and 'thinking':

> Our teacher chose certain visuals that did not include ones that would have supported the argument that our group had well enough. This meant that we were limited from coming up with many different arguments that we wanted to. It felt as though the teacher directed our way of thought in a certain direction by giving visuals that applied only to certain arguments. It sort of convinced me to look at the situation from a different way to my own. If we had different visuals we may have been given more space to formulate an argument after looking at all sides.(Nisha)

Carmel highlights “looking at all sides” of the event in order to construct a comprehensive argument as important. Her desire to have “all sides” of the event heard reinforces the earlier the discussion in chapter six around the importance of multiple narratives to the participants in the creation of nuanced and valid historical narratives. Carmel feels that the learning activity directs them to give more weight to one argument over another, and that this focus prevents the construction of an argument that may challenge the existing narrative. Penelope mirrors Carmel’s concern stating that:

> My teacher could have a preconceived idea as to what she thought was the main cause of the My Lai massacre and as a result chose visuals that leaned towards the tactics being the most significant cause. Others may not agree with this and struggle to find visuals for the cause they found to be significant. (Penelope)

There is a clear recognition of the Socratic questioning used by the teacher to elicit certain responses from participants. This technique is met with mixed feelings by the participants. Some, such as Carmel, were sceptical while also seeing the benefit in the technique as “it sort of convinced me to look at the situation from a different way to my own”, while other participants such as Penelope, felt it cheated students of the opportunity to explain fully which causes they found to be the most significant.

Talia and Penina are the most critical when considering the role of the teacher in this teaching and learning activity. Talia has a very clear understanding of who has constructed the learning in this situation and views it clearly as a disadvantage:

> The disadvantage of the teaching choosing the visuals and photos we use is that she constructs our learning and decided what we do and don’t learn. The perspectives and visuals she picked may also not be the visuals that we picture when it comes to certain causes. Our opinions and how we interpret the visuals may also be different to how she intended it to be. (Talia)

Talia clearly states that it is the teacher who has “decided what we do and don’t learn” and goes on to argue that that the opinions and interpretations of the teacher may not align with those of the student. In brief notes Penina makes the following observations about the activity:

> Her perspective. ‘spoon fed’ – doesn’t make us go out and research our own visuals. Therefore minimises our level of understanding on this topic. (Penina)

For Penina, the lack of agency she feels she has in the activity has resulted in her being "spoon fed" the answers. She argues that being able to source her own visuals on the topic would help to increase her "level of understanding on this topic". Penina and Talia's observations go further than just a recognition of "teacher bias" and like Carmel and Penelope, implicitly recognise the Socratic teaching technique which prompts students to think in a particular direction. The clear belief that the teacher is guiding their interpretation is also articulated by Nisha who explicitly states:

> The visuals picked from the perspective of our teacher, which to me most of the photos were leaning more towards tactics being what she wanted us to identify as the most significant. (Nisha)

An awareness of the role of the teacher in the construction of the learning activity prompted a range of observations by participants regarding the role of the historian in a wider sense. For a number of participants, the activity crystallised the constructed nature of history through their own participation in the historical process. Salote was able to correlate her actions during the activity with those of an historian noting that:

> This activity helped me see how historians select and interpret history. When we picked the images we thought were most important, it was like we were historians interpreting the My Lai massacre and then picking what we believed suits the most. (Salote)

By enacting her own agency during the activity, Salote's understanding of how history is constructed has been developed. Salote felt empowered to act as an historian and construct her own historical narrative of the My Lai massacre. The same process resulted in Nisha developing an increasingly critical and sceptical understanding of how history is constructed:

> Historians are very selective when it comes to formulating an argument using sources. A personal bias is always in any history and historians interpret the events from their own perspectives. A person with a humanitarian perspective would look closely at the effects on people and their lives etc. This means that history written is very much dependent on the historian as to the message which it portrays. (Nisha)

Like Nisha, Leilani and Louise also recognise that it is the historian who has the power to decide what they believe is 'most significant' in history. Leilani observed that "this activity helps me to understand how history is constructed and is influenced by what historians believe is the most and least significant aspects of different events". Louise also recognises

the role of the historian of determining how a historical event is portrayed when she states that “historians can either say that an event was either positive or negative. Today’s activity showed me that historians interpret history based on what they believe is significant and relevant”. Both Leilani and Louise recognised that historians based their interpretations on what they perceived to be most significant, and that they have the power to determine how a historical event is perceived. There is a clear understanding among Leilani and Louise that history is therefore selective and constructed, with the historian holding a great deal of power in that construction. Even Nisha, who stated that “a personal bias is always in any history” seems to accept this as a norm – a fact of historical narratives that needs to be dealt with by those reading them. However, perhaps in recognising the constructed nature of historical narratives, and the power of the historian in constructing them, the students have shifted that balance of power between historian and reader.

The data from activity two demonstrates that the participants are able to actively reflect on pedagogical power in the classroom, and the ways in which it impacts their learning and agency. The participants demonstrate, however, that even in classroom contexts structured by the teacher to produce certain desired outcomes; that they are capable of enacting their agency in ways the teacher may never have predicted. While examining the contested narratives of Black Saturday and the Mau movement, the Year 12 participants exhibited a clear desire to attribute blame for the violence and deaths that occurred in Apia to Colonel Allen (blame which the students felt had not been attributed thus far in recent accounts of the event written by the Waiouru Army Museum). The participants articulated this desire to tell the truth or share important information regarding who was to blame for the deaths on Black Saturday in both their individual reflections and the historical accounts they constructed of the day themselves:

> In the account I decided to include the fact that Black Saturday turned violent and negative as a result of the implementation of Colonel Allen’s arresting a wanted person who was marching along with the Mau and supporters on this day however I also included Colonel Allen’s perspective that the Mau were to blame to make it less bias and speak of 2 perspectives than just one. (Caitlin)

> Colonel Allen was significantly to blame for the deaths of those who died on Black Saturday, as he was in charge and enforced the arrest of a wanted person which cause the outbreak of violence. However, Colonel Allen blamed the Mau for the

> breakout of brutality because he believed it was their fault because they were following orders. (Caitlin and Alicia)

The participants also argue that it is important that people know how many Mau died at Black Saturday. Indeed, for some, communicating to the reader who dies and the impact of those deaths on the Mau, takes precedence when constructing their own narratives of the event.

> I included the number of deaths caused on Black Saturday because it is important for people to know what happened. (Jennifer)

> We included number of deaths as this is important for people to know who and how many people died because they were supporting the Mau. We decide to leave out Colonel S A achievements and his background as we wanted to focus specifically on Black Saturday and not overshadow or complimenting his actions…. (Pania)

> I decided to include information about the number of deaths included in the attached made against the Mau movement to show the impact it made on the future Mau members, especially since their leader Tupua Tamasese Lealofi III was killed amongst the crossfire. (Caitlin)

A recurring theme throughout the narratives constructed by the participants is the search for social justice. Teresa and Marianna also frame the actions of the Mau that day in the context of a search for justice:

> I still feel that those persecuted should be given justice. (Teresa)

> It was a day of remembrance of the death of Tupua Tamasese and eleven others due to their stand for justice, for the independence of Samoa. (Marianna)

For many participants, the actions of the Mau are underpinned by a search for justice. The actions of those after the event are also motivated by that same desire. Maria felt that including Helen Clark's 2002 apology to Samoa in their own historical narrative was important to illustrate that the Mau had been treated unjustly by the New Zealand Administration in Samoa and that the apology served as a way to bring a sense of justice and closure to the event:

> I believe it was important to talk about the main points on what happened and who were involved, also the statement about Helen Clark apologising is important to Samoans as this is an act of justice and peace. (Maria)

Summary

This chapter has described the participants' understanding of power in both the historical and classroom context. It argues that participants in the study clearly articulate issues of power as a struggle between a dominant Eurocentric discourse and the marginalisation of minority perspectives. The participants' understanding of power also manifests itself in their recognition of power imbalances they encounter in the classroom. This chapter asserts that the participants involved in the study can recognise pedagogical power and chose to engage with it in varying ways, at times exhibiting a desire for agency. Some participants enact this desire for agency by constructing historical narratives that seek to rectify perceived historical injustices. Chapter eight will present the ways in which the participants identify (or in some cases, fail to identify) with the historical contexts they encounter in the classroom.

Chapter Eight: Findings: Student Identification with Historical Contexts in the Classroom

Introduction

This chapter presents the final theme that structures the findings of this study. It details the ways in which the participants involved in the study identify with the historical contexts they encounter in the classroom. It identifies three ways the participants identify with the history presented to them in the classroom:

1. By recognising history as personally relevant to themselves in some way
2. By placing themselves in the role of historical actors to make sense of the history they encounter
3. By linking the history explored in class to current events.

‘Relevant’ history and its relationship to identity

Part of the participants’ process of identifying with history is related to what history they perceive as being relevant to them. At the beginning of the talanoa I presented the participants with contested images around the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi and the place of Māori in New Zealand society since 1840. I chose the context deliberately as I wanted an event I thought would provoke discussion among students around social justice and the marginalisation of indigenous people, especially in historical narratives. The participants did not respond to the context in the way I anticipated. At the beginning of the talanoa I asked the participants to organise the images into any categories they liked. They did this diligently, and with their historical thinking caps on. They identified different perspectives, sorted them by source type and engaged with the idea of contested history prompted by the protests depicted in the images. While these images provided a springboard for a more general discussion on the contested nature of history, however enthusiasm to discuss the specific context itself was low. The talanoa moved on to discussing the Eurocentric nature of history and the marginalisation of minority perspectives in the history they had studied at school.

After critiquing their study of the My Lai massacre, and the lack of a strong Vietnamese perspective in it, I asked the participants what they thought of the other topics they had studied during their three years of history education at McAuley High School:

Researcher	How did you feel about Salem though?
muffled	I hated it.
Louise	It was interesting, but then you kind of question how is this relevant to us in anyway?
Penelope	I just liked the Reformation part.
Researcher	So, you enjoyed the Reformation?
Penelope	Yeah, like Sir was saying he wishes the Reformation was taught in R[eligious] E[ducation].
Researcher	So, why did you enjoy the Reformation?
Penelope	Because of the links to the Church and stuff, and like I go to a Protestant church, so I finally understood how things were formed.
Researcher	So, did you feel like that had more relevance to you?
Penelope	Yeah, I could understand more

In their study of history in Year 12, the students examined the Salem Witch Trials of 1692. Louise makes a point of separating the concepts of interest and relevance when she discusses the appeal of this historical topic. While Louise found studying the Salem Witch trials “interesting” she questioned how it was of relevance to herself and other students. Conversely, Penelope was able to clearly identify aspects of the topic that she felt were relevant to her, in particular the study of the Reformation. As a Protestant attending a Catholic School, Penelope found that learning about the reformation meant she “finally understood how things were formed”. Penelope found the study of the Reformation relevant to her because it helped to make sense of the world she inhabits today.

Penelope also linked the previous discussion of the marginalisation of minority perspectives in the history they have studied at school to the Treaty context. In doing so she opens an interesting conversation around how the students view ‘New Zealand history’:

Researcher	Do you feel those ideas around what proper history is still exist?
Penelope	Like, kind of now we do, like even with the Treaty and stuff, we don't hear about it, cause Eurocentric history is like, more important and comes across as being more important than learning about our own history.
Nisha	I think personally I get put off when I see like New Zealand history. I just kind of find it boring.
Researcher	So, it's how it is put across? Did you guys enjoy doing the Dawn Raids though?
Group	Yeah.
Researcher	That was New Zealand history.
Penelope	I think like, most of us could related to it probably because, like the Polynesian aspect.
Researcher	What about women in war?
Louise	I am so over the war, being doing the war since forever.

Nisha perceives New Zealand history as "boring", a context that "puts her off" and lacks interest for her. However, when probed further as to what they thought of their study of the Dawn Raids in 1970s New Zealand, the students agreed that they had all enjoyed studying the topic. Penelope attributes this enjoyment to the fact that "most of us could relate to it probably because, like the Polynesian aspect". The Dawn Raids are clearly part of New Zealand's history. The participants' enjoyment of the topic would imply that it is not New Zealand history as a whole that the students dislike, but the parts of New Zealand history that the participants feel they cannot relate to. An inability to relate to New Zealand's colonial history in particular is raised again by participants later in the talanoa. That the participants related to an aspect of New Zealand history where they could see themselves in the narrative, leads me to draw the conclusion that the participants lack an interest in parts of New Zealand history where they perceive themselves as missing from the narrative.

In order to delve deeper into the participants' relationship with New Zealand history, I asked the them to look again at the visuals I provided at the beginning of the talanoa. In the context of this talanoa, the aspect of New Zealand history we explored was the signing of the Treaty

of Waitangi and its aftermath. Penelope clearly articulates the reasons why she feels no connection to the history of the signing of the Treaty:

Penelope	The idea… like if you were to ask any of us what the Treaty is, what we know is between Māori and Pākehā. So, if you introduce like Pākehā… we technically fall into that group because we are not from here. But I'm going based on what I've always been told, like…. I cannot relate [to the Treaty] because I'm not Māori or Pākehā.
Researcher	So you feel like that history is not your history?
Penelope	Yeah, at the same time we have to consider what you told us - we are not from here.

For Penelope, the Treaty of Waitangi is a document between Māori and Pākehā, and therefore is only relevant to those two groups. She states that she "cannot relate because I'm not Māori or Pākehā". Penelope's understanding of the Treaty of Waitangi has been framed as a Māori-Pākehā issue, and because she identifies with neither group, she does not perceive the Treaty as relevant to her. Penelope's ideas around the Treaty and its relevance to her had recently been challenged, however, during a history tutorial. At different points in the talanoa Penelope refers to groups who are "not from here". These comments refer to a previous discussion at a history tutorial where we explored the idea of the Treaty being relevant to all non-ingenious peoples living in New Zealand as it facilitated the migration of the groups who make up our multicultural society. This discussion was prompted by a blog post entitled "Pasifika's position in honouring the bi-cultural Te Triti partnership" in which Faaea-Semeatu (2014) argued that "the definition of Pākehā should include the notion that anybody who is non-Māori, who does not identify as Māori – but are migrants or descendants of migrants to Aotearoa – are collectively known as Pākehā" (para.8*).* By referencing this previous discussion, Penelope is demonstrating a possible shift in her thinking towards the history of the treaty of Waitangi and acknowledging that it could have more relevance for her than she initially allowed.

Louise is very clear that she is not interested in studying the Treaty, and for her interest and relevance are inherently linked when it comes to this particular historical context:

Louise	I really don't have any interest in the Treaty of Waitangi. It is important and I can see that it is and it is always on the news

	and it is great for Māori to get back money for it, but as an individual, I just see no relevance to me and how it should affect me in a way since I'm not owning any Māori land.
Penelope	At the same time, even though we can't relate we have to acknowledge how important it is to people, so it makes it like sensitive to those people involved.
Researcher	Is it more like you see it as something that happened to other groups and you are out on the outside? So even though it is New Zealand and our country, is it similar to even looking at My Lai? Does it still feel foreign for you?
Group	Yeah.

Louise perceives issues around the Treaty as relating primarily to land and Treaty settlements. The Treaty is not seen as relevant to her because it does not impact her life in a demonstrable way. Louise is careful to preface her discussion with an acknowledgement that despite it being uninteresting to her, she knows "it is important and I can see that it is and it is always on the news…". Penelope reinforces the notion of the "importance" of the Treaty and while confirming Louise's position that they "can't relate" to the topic, that they "have to acknowledge how important it is to people". Both Louise and Penelope demonstrate an appreciation for the wider social and political context which tells them that the Treaty is an issue of great importance in New Zealand, including its consistent presence in the news media. However, both Louise and Penelope struggle to see themselves in the historical narrative that surrounds the signing of New Zealand's founding document. Their ambivalence, and at times hostility, towards New Zealand history indicates that Louise and Penelope fail to identify with the traditional narratives that construct ideas of nationhood in New Zealand.

When asked what topics they thought New Zealanders should be learning the participants were reluctant to identify any specific contexts, instead turning the question back on me:

Researcher	So what would you choose, what do you think we should learn about as New Zealanders? If you had to say "this is what I think should be in the history curriculum at McAuley High School" what would you say?
Farah	What topics have you guys done in the past?

Researcher The Mau movement is one that you would have done instead of Salem - so the Mau in Samoa. At the moment we do the Springbok tour in Year 11 plus Black Civil Rights and at Year 13, before you would do a whole year of 19th century New Zealand history, so the Treaty.

(Laughter)

So, are you glad we changed it? That used to be what happened before - teachers could choose at Year 13 and you had two options: Stuart Tudor England kings and queens for the whole year or 19th century New Zealand for the whole year.

Louise I would have chosen the kings and queens.

Researcher The kings and queens? Why would you have chosen kings and queens of Europe over 19th century New Zealand?

Louise It seems more interesting.

Penelope This war falls in the 19th century New Zealand? 1800s?

Researcher 1800s, yeah.

Louise It seems more interesting, how the royals expanded their Empire, so you get to learn about Elizabeth's connection to Ireland and other places. Like expanding….

Researcher your world view?

Penelope I think it is because it's not New Zealand, anything that is not New Zealand is good.

Farah Like, I get New Zealand history is important, but it is just self-awareness. You can learn about other parts of history too… I guess.

Nisha I just feel like because we are here and are New Zealanders, we think like that… because I suppose students in America would love to learn about New Zealand and not their own like black civil rights or anything. Because they are just so used to

	hearing it and knowing about it that it becomes like, ok yeah, that is what it is. And whereas when you are learning about something totally different it is like more interesting, yeah.
Penelope	It is like hypocritical of us like to a certain extent. Like we are trying to learn something else and we can't even understand our own history.
Group	Yeah.
Researcher	Do you think you need to have a sense of your own history first? Before you can understand others? So maybe we do it the wrong way?
Penelope	Well, I don't think the order matters. I think it is as long as you understand history at some point its good.

Despite questioning the relevance of the Salem Witch Trials in a previous conversation, Louise states that she would choose a year of Tudor Stuart history, rather than study 19th century New Zealand under the old prescribed curriculum. Louise's choice seems contradictory given previous group discussions during the talanoa regarding the Eurocentric nature of the school history curriculum. However, rather than being a vote of confidence for advocates of the Tudor Stuart topic, Louise's choice possibly says more about her uneasy relationship with New Zealand history than any real appeal of Tudor Stuart history. Louise posits that learning about the expansion of the British Empire seems more interesting than learning about 19th century New Zealand (despite the latter being the enactment of the former). Penelope's comment that "I think it is because it's not New Zealand, anything that is not New Zealand is good" lends weight to this interpretation and the emerging finding that the choice between the two topics is being viewed through an "anything but New Zealand history" lens. The participants are, however, aware of the inherent tension and contradictions that exist as a result of their stance. Nisha considers the role that overfamiliarity and exposure to a particular history might play in their desire to learn about history that is not from a New Zealand context. She erroneously equates their lack of interest in New Zealand history to its ubiquitous nature, and compares it to an American context, stating that "I suppose students in America would love to learn about New Zealand and not their own like black civil rights or anything. Because they are just so used to hearing it and knowing about it that it becomes like, ok yeah, that is what it is. And whereas when you are learning about

something totally different it is like more interesting, yeah". For Nisha, the unfamiliar is inherently more interesting.

Putting the 'self' in history

When discussing the morally ambiguous actions of historical actors during the My Lai massacre, Rachel, Sara and Rebecca frequently placed themselves in the position of those involved, considering how they might respond in a certain situation. In their initial discussion of William Calley and his role in the My Lai massacre the participants empathise with Calley focusing on his lack of experience and training. They surmise that "you know, from your personal experience when you are told to do something that you don't understanding you just do it, without even thinking what is, like, the purpose of it".

At this point in the discussion the participants consider how a lack of understanding can often lead them to complete a task without clearly understanding the purpose behind it. This section of data has been used previously in chapter seven to discuss Calley's perceived vulnerability, however I am going to employ it again from a different perspective in order to demonstrate how the participants draw on their own experiences to make sense of history. Rachel, Sara and Rebecca draw a clear connection between their own experiences and Calley's experience as a young Lieutenant following the orders of the US Army. The participants develop this idea of blindly 'following orders' further when considering the role of Calley in the massacre and the power dynamics that framed his involvement:

Rachel	Yeah, you were saying also, because they were young… because Calley and his troops were young.
Sara	You can also put in your own experience, how your parents, because you are young, and your parents… you have to listen to them… like you can't argue even if they are wrong or right, you just have to do it, sort of thing.
	Yeah, I have that all the time.
Rebecca	Us, like generation.
Sara	And, then when you question what they are saying they are like "don't question me!" like "I know better than you just do what I say!" sort of thing. Exactly what Nixon was.

Rebecca Like when your parents tell you not to do something, you want to, like, now I know that, and I want to do it.

In order to make sense of Calley's actions at My Lai, Sara frames the event in her 'own experience' by drawing on the dynamics of a family situation. The US Army and Government, Nixon in particular, become the parents, while Calley and other young soldiers are the children. Sara equates following orders in an army environment with following the orders of your parents, stating that "…you have to listen to them. Like you can't argue even if they are wrong or right, you just have to do it…". Sara makes it clear that in the same way they must obey the orders of their parents, Calley must do what is required of him by Nixon and the US Army. The participants are identifying with Calley through their own life experience in an attempt to make sense of his actions at My Lai.

While grappling with Calley and his level of responsibility for the My Lai massacre, at times the gravity of Charlie Company's actions overwhelms the participants:

Sara How would you live if you came out of war killing 200 to 400 civilians?

Rebecca I don't think I would.

Sara How would you live every single day of your life knowing that you killed that many people?

Rebecca I don't know, I think you just have to deal with it.

Sara Any yet come down to saying I was only representing my country.

Rachel You are just traumatised by it.

Sara Like what's his name? The drugs? Yeah, he was like, traumatised

Rachel That one incident, like, ruined his life.

The participants attempt to make sense of the aftermath of the massacre by placing themselves in the position of the perpetrators of it. In particular, this group identifies strongly with Varnardo Simpson – a member of Charlie Company who was so traumatised by his active participation in the massacre that he eventually took his own life. The actions of Calley and Charlie Company at My Lai are shocking and at times incomprehensible to Sara, Rachel and Rebecca. For the participants to make sense of the events that took place during the My Lai massacre, they explain Calley and his actions within a more familiar framework by connecting the historical events they are exploring to their own lived experience.

The My Lai massacre is a historical context that is far removed from the lives of the participants who took part in this study. This unfamiliarity (with both the context and brutality of the events) meant that participants needed to, at times, recontextualise what happened at My Lai to make sense of the actions of those involved. When Year 12 participants explored the events of Black Saturday in Apia, Samoa however, they were able to identify with that history through their own cultural capital. When discussing the aftermath of Black Saturday and efforts by the New Zealand Marines to find the Mau nationalist movement, the participants drew on the personal knowledge of group members to draw conclusions about the efficacy of New Zealand's efforts locating the Mau. When reflecting on the ability of the Mau to hide for approximately four months in the Samoan bush, the participants remarked:

Maria	Woah, they must be hiding good as, they had the hiding skills.
Ruth	Yeah have you seen the forests in Sa[moa]?
Maria	The thing is, if they sent a lot of marines to go find them, they are marines, they should have gone in there. I know there are no pathways in into our forests. I know, they don't know our ways in our forests.
	Yeah, maybe they only went and looked up the trees, we hide underground. Yeah it seems very…
Ruth	Because New Zealand sucks… no offence (to video recorder)
Hannah	No but to be honest, New Zealand does suck at administrating/mandating over the islands
Maria	You know how they send a lot of marines to look for the Mau people in the bushes, but they didn't come out? Like the people themselves came out in March. So, they must be really good at hiding!
Ruth	That's like four months later!
Hannah	Like tree houses.
Maria	Yeah but the thing is, you know they sent the marines, you would expect the marines because they are like well skilled, but it seems to be very well trained and that, on how they put the army people to go.

Hannah But, remember it's the New Zealand marines to be honest. It's not America.

Maria I noticed, but you know how they wanted to find them? It was kind of too extreme because it's their island and if they run away who cares? It's their forest.

Maria uses her own knowledge of the terrain in Samoa to establish that the bush is difficult to navigate for those unfamiliar with it. She identifies the foreignness of the New Zealand Marines as a key factor in their failure to locate the Mau remarking that "they don't know our ways in our forests". Maria specifically identifies with the Mau and their actions in this context. This is reiterated further when she states "yeah, maybe they only went and looked up the trees, we hide underground". There is an underlying tension between the participants and the actions of New Zealand. At times it is difficult to establish if this tension is confined to the historical event being discussed or is reflective of student attitudes towards their New Zealand identity today. The participants credit the Mau with the "skills" to evade the New Zealand Marines, however they are also derisive of New Zealand stating bluntly that "New Zealand sucks". Hannah picks up on this antagonism towards New Zealand, and, after Ruth apologises to the recorder (and one can assume to me as the Pākehā teacher), she elaborates by linking Ruth's resentment to the historical event being discussed. Hannah affirms that "no but to be honest, New Zealand does suck at administrating/mandating over the islands". Maria returns to the idea of the marines being well trained, and the Mau therefore being very good at outwitting them, multiple times, taking pride in the actions of the Mau. However, this group of participants also show contempt towards New Zealand's efforts to locate and arrest the Mau, with Hannah stating that "but remember it's the New Zealand marines to be honest. It's not America". Hannah implies that while Marines may be highly skilled, those that are from New Zealand are not necessarily. The participants clearly empathise with the Mau and view the actions of the New Zealand Marines as "too extreme because it's their island and if they run away who cares? It's their forest".

When condensing this information to write an historical account of Black Saturday, the idea that "the marines didn't do a good job" locating the Mau persists among the group and forms a significant part of their historical account. Further discussion of the Mau "knowing their forest really well" leads to an in-depth conversation about Samoa itself:

Ruth	Do you have forests in Samoa?
Maria	Yeah, we do, we have more forests, we have more coconut trees than I think population. But it's really nice aye? The forest is really relaxing.
Ruth	And the waterfalls.
Hannah	What about that dirty waterfall?
Maria	Oh which one? When it is raining really hard every waterfall is dirty.
Hannah	It was kind of rainy and I forget the name and it starts with P
Maria	You mean the sliding thing? It's not dirty, that is the sliding rocks.
Hannah	No, when I was coming down it was brown, the water.
Maria	No it's because the rocks [are] behind, it is clear water but rocky as.
Ruth	Do you jump?
Maria	No. You sit and slide. You can't dive.
Hannah	There was a guy that drove his car down there.
Maria	Yeah, because when you go down you go straight down to the river. If you don't know how to, yeah if you are not Samoan you don't really know. What were we saying? The Samoans are really skilful on how they went? Oh, the Samoans had a lot of supporters.
Ruth	That helped them to hide. Like could you hide anywhere up the coconut tree?
Maria	Yeah like you have to put your legs like this, hold it, like this. Like this is the coconut here and put your legs like this. And when you move up you go like that. Because I tried it.

This conversation navigates both the participants' personal experiences of Samoa (at least two of the participants appear to have visited Samoa at some point) and the historical events they are discussing in class. Each participant is contributing to the group's understanding of the historical event. While at times the discussion veers 'off topic' the participants are actively using their cultural capital to engage with the historical knowledge being examined in class. Through their group discussion Maria, Ruth and Hannah are making connections

between the sociocultural knowledge they bring to school, and the academic knowledge they encounter in the classroom.

Maria later takes the discussion of Black Saturday in a different direction by connecting the history they are exploring in class to more recent related events she is clearly already familiar with. It is in this discussion of Helen Clark's apology to Samoa that we see the participants identify with history through both a personal connection with the events of Black Saturday, and their own knowledge of Samoan language. When asked by the teacher about any other important information that should be included in their historical account of Black Saturday, Maria states:

Maria	Important information that hardly anyone ever talks about is how Helen Clark said thank you, oh I mean sorry, yeah that is important information. Is it important Miss how Helen Clark finally says she apologised on behalf of New Zealand?
Researcher	Yeah, why do you think it might be important?
Maria	I don't think they see it as a big deal, like at first until she brought it up and they finally see how many people were killed because you know how they were the olden days? Those old people, I think when they passed on, it wasn't really important to the ones left.
Researcher	Yeah people might have forgotten about it for a while yeah, and then it came back. Also, when the people who were involved have died, do you think it makes it easier in some ways for a government to apologise? Because it wasn't Helen Clark's government?
Maria	Yeah, because Helen's about the third generation of that family, yeah they wouldn't really know how their parents felt.
Researcher	Definitely.
Ruth	They still remember.
Maria	Yeah like, Sir, yeah, his uncle, he died from this. His dad's brother. He was telling us.
Ruth	That's so sad.

Maria She also apologised for the… look it said here…. Apologised for the wrong committed during New Zealand rule. Let me look up her speech and see if she says sorry a lot.

You can write down her last speech. She says all the Samoans… that means live…. Ola means live. She said live.

Ruth Can I write it in English?

Maria You can write it in English, but I think it would be more meaningful to write it in Samoan because she actually pronounced it… yeah look she goes 'today is the symbol of our relationship represented in Samoa (speaks Samoan)… was treasured today in our relationship with the people of Samoa. May it go strength to strength'. Yeah, Ola Samoa.

Ruth I guess that's why she's so successful too! I mean she looks both ways.

Maria Yeah! She is not one of the people that goes for one side of the story, and like she wants peace and she is a very humble lady. I think because she made it, New Zealand, filled with like Samoans so she knew, she looked back on what was right.

For Maria, Former Prime Minister Helen Clark's acknowledgment of Black Saturday acknowledges New Zealand's wrongdoing while also forging a new future and relationship between Samoa and New Zealand. Ruth and Maria clearly respect Helen Clark – she remains a very popular Prime Minister with most students at the school and her photo always elicits cheers when discussing her Prime Ministership during our leadership unit in junior Social Studies. Maria makes clear social justice links between Helen Clark's 2002 apology and its impact on the relationship with Samoans in New Zealand. For Maria, it is important that Clark's apology is communicated in the original Samoan language she used stating that it is "more meaningful to write it in Samoan because she actually pronounced it". Her ability to identify the meaning and symbolism of Clark's Samoan apology results in a deeper connection with this aspect of the history of Black Saturday for the whole group. The participants also recognise the significance of this apology as a result of another personal connection to the event. By identifying a member of staff at school whose family was directly impacted by the events at My Lai, the importance of Clark's actions to those who still

remember the deaths is highlighted. By drawing on their personal experiences in their study of Black Saturday and the Mau movement, the participants are empowered to engage with a historical context that values their cultural capital.

Identifying with history through current events

The participants also identify with the history they encounter in class by linking it to current events that have shaped the world they inhabit. When discussing the contested nature of the My Lai massacre, a group of Year 13 participants were able to draw parallels between the actions of those involved in the massacre and key issues occurring in the world today. While discussing President Nixon's reference to 'several men' who were to blame for what occurred at My Lai, the group delved into a discussion which highlighted the lack of trust that they have in both politicians and the media. When discussing who Nixon believes is to blame for the My Lai massacre, the participants note that he is vague in his response – referring to several men who were 'bad apples'. The students correctly infer that Nixon is referring to Calley and media with this statement:

> Telesia — But, you know what he is talking about eh? He is just saying Medina and Calley and no one after that because they go to the journalists. So keep it to Medina, or actually keep it to Calley and its all good.

Nisha quickly makes a connection between Nixon's reluctance to specifically name those responsible for the massacre and his use of phrases such as 'bad apples', and President Trump's use of appealing soundbites to demonise particular groups:

> Nisha — Just like Trump was like 'these bad people in the country do bad things', I'm like, what bad people? It's like everyone in America is a bad person.
>
> Telesia — Did Barack Obama ever mention Osama Bin Laden?
>
> Nisha — He always mentions names when it is like something else, but when it is America…
>
> Group — (inaudible)
>
> Nisha — So it was 'Osama Bin Laden must go down, Osama Bin Laden…'
>
> Telesia — My point is not everyone says names.

Nisha Because people can pull strings if you do that, so like they have to make sure every statement you cannot be taken in a different way or misunderstood because once you do that then the journalists, they do this a lot. They just twist words and make it different things.

Remember the history exam thing? How in the paper it said the guy said 'yeah basically a student can just revise for an exam and get an excellence' then that is not what he said because he said something more, but what the journalist did is they chopped off the end of it and put that in? And now everyone is like 'oh my God', you know. I feel like in interviews as well they have to be careful about what they say in every word, in case someone twists it.

Louise I think we can't really be sure that is the exact words.

While the discussion is initially centred on the idea of politicians being evasive it quickly moves to a critique of the media. The media is perceived by Nisha as untrustworthy – "they just twist words and make it different things". Through their examination of Nixon and his interactions with the media in the wake of the exposure of the massacre, the participants have drawn clear parallels between 1970s and modern-day America. They have also connected their distrust of the media's portrayal of Nixon's views to the New Zealand context and controversy surrounding the plagiarism of exemplar essays in national examinations.

The same group makes a similar connection between the My Lai massacre and an alleged war crime closer to home. When discussing Ridenhour's letter exposing what occurred at My Lai, Telesia notes that the cover up was still in effect at this point:

Telesia Because apparently the story was already out in the public and he was saying there was actually a massacre, but people didn't believe it and so this letter is saying…

Louise 400 to 500 people, and they think it was like 20.

Telesia And, it was for war purposes, yeah, more or less.

Telesia and Louise have drawn the conclusion that Ridenhour's letter had to dispel the misinformation that had been spread by the US Army regarding the events at My Lai in order to expose it. Nisha connects the eventual exposure of the My Lai massacre to a similar issue in the New Zealand context:

Nisha You know that we are living through that time right now? And 10 years later you find out how many massacres the New Zealand Army committed in countries that they are serving in currently.

Louise Can you name an example?

Nisha Like the one, what's his name? I forgot. He wrote a book about there was a massacre the New Zealand armed forces and 28 civilians killed, and there was a little girl as well and they took her and they had a photo of one of the victims, but no one believed them because "it is just war and you are exaggerating it" and the New Zealand Army said they are not going to conduct an official investigation because the ones that they did proved there was no record. But, I'm like, trust me, wait another 10 years this will come out just like My Lai did.

I mean, I'm not saying this is ok, but you know that it happens in war so you can't really stop it. You can't really go out there and not expect to see some civilians get killed. Its war, you know, it's going to happen. Someone is going to die.

Nisha draws clear parallels between the massacre at My Lai and the allegations that "six civilians were killed and 15 injured during a 'revenge raid' on two Afghan villages led by New Zealand SAS troops in 2010" (One News, 2018). The alleged "revenge raid" was exposed by investigative Journalist Nicky Hager. Although Nisha overestimates the number of civilians killed, there are a number of similarities between the two examples – the death of a young child, a "revenge raid" and the refusal of the New Zealand Army to conduct an official investigation into the allegations. By linking My Lai to New Zealand's actions in Afghanistan, Nisha draws the conclusion that while regrettable, civilian deaths are inevitable during war.

Both Year 12 and 13 participants have demonstrated an ability to identify with the history they encounter in the classroom through their personal experience and cultural capital, by placing themselves in the position of historical characters to make sense of their actions and by linking history to current events that shape their world. The sociocultural knowledge that the participants bring to the classroom therefore shapes the lenses through which they view history and the ways in which they engage with it.

Summary

This chapter has argued that the participants in the study identify with history in a range of ways. It posits that the history participants believe to be of relevance or interest to them is incredibly nuanced, and that these nuances mean that participants can find often unexpected entry points into a range of different contexts. This chapter highlights that the participants in this study found personal connections with contexts in which they have cultural capital to be powerful vehicles for learning. The inclusion of historical contexts which link to their sociocultural knowledge provided students with a sense that their cultural capital was valued and a foundation from which they could build their understanding of a new context. In the next chapter, the findings from the previous three chapters will be interpreted using a conceptual model that draws heavily on Giroux's (2011, 1983a, 1983b) writing on critical pedagogy and resistance theory.

Chapter Nine: Discussion - A Lens of Marginalisation and Acts of Resistance in the Classroom

Introduction

In this chapter I use Giroux's (1983a, 1983b, 2003, 2011) writing on resistance theory and critical pedagogy to explain the interpretative framework of the participants when they enter the history classroom, and how that framework shapes their engagement with, and responses to, historical knowledge and pedagogical power. This chapter begins with a discussion of the participants' identities in the classroom. It then outlines how I framed the history that the participants engaged with through a critical pedagogy approach which allowed for "pockets of resistance" to occur in the classroom (Giroux, 1983b, p.293). Following this discussion, I argue that the participants in this study filtered the history they engaged with through a lens of marginalisation, and that this lens of marginalisation leads the participants to make agentic choices in the classroom. These agentic choices range from choosing to comply with teacher requests, to performing "quietly subversive" acts of resistance including critiquing historical texts, transforming historical knowledge and disengaging from historical narratives (Giroux, 1983b, p.287).

Resistance theory as an explanatory framework for the discussion

Resistance theory has traditionally been used to explain "school failure and oppositional behaviour", focusing largely on class oppression, male culture and "overt acts of student behaviour" (Giroux, 1983b, p.287, 289). Giroux argues for a resistance theory that takes into account issues of gender and race and allows for the recognition of "quietly subversive acts" (Giroux, 1983b, p.287). This research seeks to use resistance theory in a new way - as a vehicle to explore the experience of predominantly female Pacific learners in order to examine their understanding of, and responses to, the history they encounter at school. In this chapter I use resistance theory to explore the experiences and actions of a group of students who, although traditionally underserved by the education system in New Zealand, in the context of this study experience high levels of educational success and demonstrate strong levels of engagement in the classroom. Despite the majority of participants in the research experiencing educational success, upon closer analysis it is clear that oppositional behaviours are still evident in the classroom. These oppositional behaviours are, however,

more nuanced and “quietly subversive” than those traditionally associated with resistance theory. The nuanced acts of resistance discussed in this chapter powerfully reveal the relationship between the participants of this study and their experience not only learning history, but also their relationship with wider society.

Resistance theory identifies schools as “sites of struggle” (Giroux, 2011, 1983a, 1983b). I will argue in this chapter that the struggle which takes place in this context is centred around issues of identity and the tension between the dominant Western framing of history in the classroom and the marginalised lens through which the students filter that historical knowledge. This struggle is articulated by the participants in different ways – through a critique of the Eurocentrism that dominates the history curriculum they encounter at school, conflict between oral and written histories, the marginalisation of minority perspectives in historical narratives and a desire for history to be socially just. I argue that tension between these two interpretative frameworks can result in the students performing acts of resistance in the classroom.

Student identities and histories in the classroom

The first step in the process of understanding the interpretative frameworks of the participants in this study is recognising that they bring their own unique and diverse histories and identities with them to the classroom. A sociocultural approach to history education helps me to better understand my participants. It argues that individual histories influence the interpretative frameworks of students and their engagement with history. Epstein (2009) argues that:

> A social justice approach to teaching history also entails teachers taking into account how children’s or adolescents’ identities influence their view of history, society and state-sanctioned or dominant historical interpretations in schools and the mainstream culture. (p.xv).

Wertsch (2002) argues that the interpretative frameworks of students are shaped by, among other aspects, their nationality, ethnicity, gender and religious orientation. This belief underpins a sociocultural approach to history education and shapes my understanding of my participants. Esptein (2009) also posits that:

> Teachers who understand the interpretative framework through which students construct or critique school knowledge will be better able to create pedagogical strategies which open students’ minds to learning about US history from a social justice context (p. xvi)

I argue that the same premise applies to the teaching and learning of history in New Zealand, in particular with regard to the engagement of minority groups with New Zealand's complex history. While there is some work exploring the interpretive frameworks of Māori and Pākehā students (Levstik, 2008b; Hunter and Farthing, 2008; Harcourt et al, 2017) very little research has been conducted that explores in depth the interpretative frameworks of Pacific peoples or other minority groups in the New Zealand context. This study adds to the conversation that exists around understanding the interpretative frameworks of students from minority groups who present in our classrooms. While Epstein (2009) and Wertsch (2002) have outlined in general the aspects of identity that shape the interpretative frameworks of students, I would like to paint a more specific picture of the aspects of identity that shaped the frameworks of participants involved in this study.

The participants in this study are girls of predominantly Pacific Island descent aged from 16 to 18 years old. Most participants identified as Samoan, although some involved in the study identified with more than one ethnic group. It is important to note that while the participants in this study were predominantly Pacific learners, there were two important exceptions. Two participants heavily involved in both the class activities and talanoa, Nisha and Farah, identified as Kashmiri and Afghan. These students also identified as Muslim, and in the context of the school constituted both an ethnic and religious minority. Despite this ethnic and religious difference, much of the data gathered from these participants aligned with the wider findings of the research project. Both Nisha and Farah's positioning as a minority in both the school and wider society was reflected in their awareness of the Eurocentric dominance in the curriculum, albeit from a different perspective. The participants in this study overwhelmingly brought to the classroom personal histories and identities influenced by the immigration stories of New Zealand. The participants all attended a Catholic high school, although not all were practicing Catholics. Christianity does, however, play a large role in the lives of Pacific peoples, and many other migrants, in New Zealand. As stated earlier in the thesis, the participants in this study lived in different suburbs throughout the South Auckland area. The students at the school fit the statistical profile of Pacific learners with many from low socioeconomic and underprivileged backgrounds, However, as previously discussed, the achievement of the students at McAuley High School does not reflect the "long tail of underachievement" experienced by many Pacific learners (Ell & Grundoff, 2013, p.75). The culture of success and emphasis on building positive learning relationships at the school helps to provide an insight into the ways in which the students at McAuley High School view themselves and their learning:

> They [the teachers] treat us like we are their own children, and I think that's the bond that really inspires us students to believe in ourselves and that we can make it… that we are all able to achieve" (*Quote from unidentified McAuley High School student*, Fernandes, 2017).

The quote above is reflective of a wider culture at McAuley High School which rejects a student identity structured around deficit theorising and instead nurtures one that is agentic. The participants in this study bring these identities with them into the classroom. Once there, these identities encountered the histories and teaching and learning activities which I had structured through my own interpretative lens as their teacher.

Teacher framing of the topic and expectations

My initial goal for this study was to explore how students understood history as constructed and contested. In order to do so, I wanted participants to participate in teaching and learning activities that would not only prompt them to engage with a contested history, but that would also prepare them for assessment at a later date. As the teacher-researcher I clearly established a framework through which I wanted the participants to engage with each history. The motivations behind the choice of each topic and the particularities of the activities selected for the participants are discussed in chapter five, however I would like to address the extent to which the teaching and learning strategies used in the study aligned with a critical pedagogy approach. I argue that this critical pedagogy approach, although undertaken at the time without knowing the label, allowed for "pockets of resistance" to exist in the classroom, which at times prompted acts of resistance on the part of the participants.

Critical pedagogy requires teachers to give students the opportunity to interrogate and critique texts in order to transform knowledge with the ultimate goal of:

> educat[ing] students to lead a meaningful life, learn how to hold power and authority accountable and develop the skills, knowledge and courage to challenge common sense assumptions while being willing to struggle for a more socially just world (Giroux, 2011, p.7).

The application of critical pedagogy in the classroom is varied. Giroux (2011) conceives of critical pedagogy as localised and responsive to the students and their community. Giroux's (2011) critical pedagogy advocates for classroom knowledge to connect to student experience, identity, histories so that they can think critically in order to "define who they are and how they relate to others" (p.6). In the New Zealand context critical pedagogy is

accommodated by a curriculum in which teachers are encouraged to “design tasks and opportunities that require students to critically evaluate the material they use and consider the purposes for which it was originally created” (Ministry of Education, 2016, para 9.). This focus on developing the critical thinking of students is coupled with a desire to make learning relevant and connected to the student’s prior learning and experience. The localised nature of critical pedagogy, and its emphasis on providing students with the tools to transform, rather than assimilate, knowledge, aligns with this study and its focus on a particular, localised context.

I used activities in the study that would encourage students to think critically and interrogate the texts they were presented with in class. While I anticipated that participants would interrogate the historical documents used both in class and the talanoa, I did not anticipate that the participants would also interrogate the wider frameworks that structured their learning. In this study, the framing of history in the classroom became a text open for critique and interrogation. The result of these interrogations was often the transformation of particular historical knowledge to meet the needs of the students themselves, or an attempt by the students to critique and hold to account those in a position of power and authority, both historically and in the present day. Both actions demonstrated student ability to exercise agency in the classroom and are reflective of the goals of critical pedagogy as defined by Giroux (2011).

While the teaching and learning activities used in the study provided opportunities for these “pockets of resistance” to occur, my perspective still dominated the ways in which the topics were framed and consequently how the participants interacted with them. In doing so, I envisaged expected outcomes from the teaching and learning that took place in class. This perhaps is not surprising given the natural inclination of teachers towards developing learning outcomes for the strategies they employ in the classroom. However, the ways in which the participants related to and interpreted the different histories in the study often differed to my own. Students were asked to reconcile and critique contradictory perspectives on an event, or to consider issues of pedagogical power. The data show that the way the students engaged with the histories, perspectives and activities they encountered in class at times conflicted with my own interpretative framework. I argue that this difference in interpretation could be attributed to a lens of marginalisation which the students in this study brought with them to the classroom, which prioritises the experience of the marginalised in historical narratives.

The lens of marginalisation

I argue that the participants' response to the framing of the topics and pedagogical strategies used in the study, was to filter the history they encountered through a lens of marginalisation. The participants brought the lens of marginalisation to the classroom and it underpins their historical thinking in multiple ways. I believe the lens of marginalisation shapes the ways in which the participants engage with issues of bias in historical sources, how they understand historical narratives to be constructed and what history they perceive as being relevant to them. This lens of marginalisation not only influences the ways in which participants engage with historical content, but it also leads to agentic behaviour and acts of resistance in the classroom.

The findings show that the concept of bias dominated student understanding of the validity of the historical sources they encountered in class. Whether or not a historical actor or historian was perceived as biased by students determined which narrative they found most trustworthy, and were therefore likely to privilege in any subsequent engagement with the event. I argue that the lens of marginalisation brought by students to the classroom filtered their understanding of bias and consequently influenced the decisions they made around the validity of sources. A privileging of minority perspectives by the students is reflected in the dominant belief that the inclusion (or lack of) multiple perspectives in a historical account significantly impacts the validity and trustworthiness of historical sources or narratives. The requirement for historical narratives to consider multiple perspectives on an event was raised in both the talanoa and highlighted in student responses to the first activity (where different interpretations of a historical event were interrogated). Bias is perceived as inherent and unavoidable by the participants. This belief was articulated explicitly by Penelope who argued that "… like you are always going to have, like, bias, no matter how neutral you come across or you try to come across you are always going to have a bias". The participants in the talanoa posited that the inclusion of multiple perspectives on an event could go some way to countering this bias, allowing readers, as Nisha argues, to "see every side's perspective as a whole". For the participants involved in the study, the inclusion of multiple perspectives in the narrative of a historical event mitigates the inherent Eurocentric bias of historians (or historical actors) constructing the narrative. The inclusion (and exclusion) of multiple perspectives plays a significant role in how the students determine the validity of a historical source, with participants consistently demonstrating a belief that the inclusion of multiple perspectives prevents one perspective from dominating the historical narrative. This

belief is typified in statements made by the participants, such as “[a]ftermath is not biased because it talks about both perspectives, it doesn’t side with either the Admin[istration] or the Mau, it just states facts and it’s a fair source”.

In assessing the reliability of a source, the participants demonstrated a keen awareness of the need for more than one perspective to be considered in the analysis of an event and a desire to look for those perspectives that may have been marginalised. This often led to students discounting those sources they felt marginalised a particular perspective. The implications of these decisions will be discussed further when the acts of resistance taken by students are considered in more detail. The participants’ focus on the inclusion of multiple perspectives in historical narratives is coupled with a readiness to privilege those historical perspectives they perceive as being motivate by a desire for social justice. For example, Ron Ridenhour’s account of the My Lai massacre was given great credence by the participants in Group 13C who state:

> This is a primary source and we believe that it is reliable because there was no form of bias in his letter and he was the only one that came forward meaning that the event really affected him and he wanted justice to be served.

The participants overlook Ridenhour’s personal connection to the event and attribute his lack of bias to his desire to see “justice be served”. Ridenhour’s selfless desire to expose the massacre is highlighted by several participant groups. The perspectives of historical actors who are perceived as working for justice are perceived as more credible and historically valid by the students. As a result, the participants were often willing to overlook possible issues of bias in favour of privileging a social justice narrative. The lens of marginalisation through which students have filtered the My Lai massacre has resulted in both a privileging of those perspectives which ascribe to the social justice narrative preferred by participants, and a desire for multiple perspectives to be addressed in the historical narratives of the event.

The lens of marginalisation that shapes the interpretative frameworks of the participants involved in the study is underpinned by a keen awareness of the role power plays in the actions of historical actors and the construction of history itself. The participants in this study articulated their understanding of power when comparing and contrasting the historical accounts of President Nixon and Lieutenant William Calley regarding the My Lai massacre. The power differential between President Nixon and Calley, and its impact on the sources being analysed by the participants, is discussed in detail by students Sara, Rachel and Rebecca. Similar discussions of the impact of power (and the lack of it) on the actions of

historical actors also feature in the written work of other participants who identify those higher up the military hierarchy as responsible for Calley's actions on that day. The participants demonstrate a propensity towards privileging the historical narratives of the underdog – their treatment of President Nixon's account of the My Lai massacre speaks to this aspect of their historical thinking. Nixon's motivations and position of power renders his accounts bias (and therefore untrustworthy) while participants frequently perceive Calley as being powerless and a victim of the situation. Calley's lack of power is posited by students as a justification for finding his account of the event more credible. Nixon is characterised by students as holding all the power and therefore capable of abusing it for his own advantage:

> It's pretty straightforward, like someone at the top picking on someone at the bottom, like bullying basically. It is obvious who is going to take it out, Nixon is going to take it out. (Rachel)

In placing William Calley in a position of weakness, the participants draw on the structural issues that surround the recruitment of young, uneducated, working class men to fight in the Vietnam War in order to provide a wider context that explains Calley and his actions. While the students struggle with the morality of Calley's actions on that day, they are almost perceived as inevitable given the conditions in which he operated in Vietnam. Importantly, Rachel, Rebecca and Sara see his participation in the massacre as a result of the environment that he was working in and his lowly position in it, remarking that "I don't see how this is Calley's fault, like he was trained and he was young" and that "he was rushed through training because he was a drop out". According to the students, Calley follows the orders to kill at My Lai because he was trained to accept orders without question. The focus on Calley's youth also implies a vulnerability that could be exploited by others. This is reiterated by the same group in their written narratives of the event:

> Calley's position was at stake and he was vulnerable… he was afraid of what might happen to him if he didn't follow orders. In order for Calley to secure his position he had to follow orders from superiors above the rank from him. This would have made Calley more pressured to impress his superiors. Calley was young, uneducated, unemployed, inexperienced and these were negative influence on his attitude. (Group 13H)

In this way the participants have positioned Calley as the marginalised, easily manipulated and influenced by those in positions of authority. This marginalised status makes his account of My Lai more credible to the students who are willing at times to overlook any possible

benefits he might gain from arguing that he was following orders that day in My Lai. The participants in the study demonstrate a mistrust of those who hold positions of power and look upon those in positions of weakness in a more credible light. This scepticism of the powerful is often articulated by the participants through the concept of bias in their analysis of historical sources and perspectives.

The lens of marginalisation employed by students filters their understanding of historical bias and often results in the students siding with the perceived underdog or those seeking justice. Empathy towards the underdog, or the marginalised, is evident in student engagement with the My Lai topic where the narratives constructed by students tend to favour those perceived as weak, marginalised or in the pursuit of justice (even when those historical actors being discussed were also perpetrators of crimes). The participants recreate their own versions of history which the lens of marginalisation validates. These histories often counter the 'official' narratives presented to the participants throughout the history they encounter in the classroom. The participants' positioning of Calley as vulnerable and marginalised demonstrates a tension within the lens of marginalisation. During this activity the participants frame Calley as an underdog possibly because in this context (where the history being studied has been framed from a predominantly Eurocentric perspective) Calley becomes the historical actor that the participants can most easily identify with. Calley is perceived by the participants as young, vulnerable and at the mercy of those in power. The participants articulate their identification with his predicament clearly in their discussion of why he followed the orders he did at My Lai likening the orders to those you would receive from a parent. Rachel, Rebecca and Sara argue that Calley had little choice but to follow them because, like a parent, the Army was implicitly saying "I know better than you, just do what I say". The participants are clearly attempting to connect with the historical actors in the narrative they are exploring on a personal level. The lens of marginalisation prompts participants to look for those they can identify as most like them. In this case, that person is William Calley. Their conversation demonstrates a clear understanding of the dynamics of power and how it impacts the actions of those in a weaker position. The historical narrative created by the participants articulates the lens of marginalisation through which the history was filtered.

The desire to privilege or promote the narratives of those they perceive as being marginalised is also evident in the historical narratives the students construct around Black Saturday. Unlike My Lai, which is a topic most students encounter in class having relatively little prior knowledge of, Black Saturday and the activities of the Samoan Mau movement is a

more familiar, and at times personal, history for many of the participants in the study. In this context the participants identified explicitly with those Samoans who the New Zealand Administration attempted to subjugate and rule. When discussing the actions of the New Zealand Marines in trying to locate and arrest the Mau after Black Saturday occurred, the participants clearly identified with the Mau, remarking that the New Zealand Marines "don't know our ways in our forests" and hypothesising that "maybe they only went and looked up the trees, we hide underground". While analysing the differing accounts of Black Saturday, and the aftermath of the massacre that occurred, these students drew on their cultural capital to establish connections with the historical content, and ultimately position themselves alongside the Mau and their supporters as a people who the New Zealand Administration tried to marginalise but with little success. The participants demonstrated a clear awareness of the imperialist motives of the New Zealand Government and took great pride in the acts of resistance taken by the Mau and their ability to thwart the attempts of the New Zealand government to find them:

> Maria You know how they sent a lot of marines to look for the Mau people in the bushes but they didn't come out, like the people themselves came out in March. So they must be really good at hiding.
>
> Ruth That's like four months later!

Alongside a strong identification with the Samoan perspective there is a clear antagonism towards the New Zealand Government articulated by the participants. The participants are often disdainful of the actions of New Zealand in Samoa, stating bluntly that "New Zealand sucks" and lacks the skills to effectively govern Samoa, while often deriding the efforts of the New Zealand Marines in Samoa. The only positive discussion of New Zealand occurs when the participants encounter Prime Minister Helen Clark's 2002 apology to the Samoan people, which the students perceive as a redressing of past injustices. This apparent antagonism towards New Zealand will be discussed in further detail, however this would be recognised by Giroux (2011) as an act in critical pedagogy and indicative of the participant's desire to hold those in power to account, even if the participants themselves may not recognise this themselves. This desire to take the side of the oppressed is evident when the participants work to hold President Nixon and the US government accountable for the My Lai massacre, positioning Calley and the other young soldiers involved as devoid of agency as a result of the power imbalance, while attributing the willingness of those who did refuse to kill to their more mature age and experience. The desire to fight oppression is even clearer in the

participants treatment of the New Zealand Administration during their study of the Mau in Western Samoa.

The lens of marginalisation which filters student understanding of history is particularly evident in the participant's critique of the Eurocentric framing of the My Lai massacre unit, and more general critiques of the school history curriculum itself. These critiques emerged from the talanoa, where I had anticipated that the students and I would discuss the contested nature of New Zealand's history from the perspective of Māori-Pākehā race relations, prompted by visuals of historical sources. Upon reflection it is obvious that my own interpretative framework coloured the responses I expected from my students, and that despite being in my eighth year of teaching predominantly Pacific learners, I had not, at this point, fully considered the ways in which their particular interpretative frameworks might result in the students engaging with historical content and discussions in completely unexpected ways. The students in participating in the talanoa quickly identified a Eurocentric bias in the history they had been taught at school, with Farah remarking:

> We always learn about Europe and it's a little bit like, *(nervous group laughter)* I don't know, I mean there is nothing wrong with it, it's just you need to be more aware and a lot of people aren't aware that there are other events in history too basically.

When the students are asked what they think could be done to counter this bias Nisha quickly replied, "minority perspectives, like when we learn something I feel like we should touch on the other side as well". At this point during the talanoa I will admit to feeling somewhat uncomfortable as a result of the participants responses. While the students were expressing their belief that the history they encountered in school was essentially Eurocentric and dominated by the writing of European men, I quickly canvassed the topics we had explored as a group over the three years of senior history. While doing so, I began to silently reassure myself that as their teacher I had clearly made a significant effort to include histories I thought were varied and inclusive of a number of minority groups. Surely I hadn't just presented them with a rehashing of the dominant historical narratives that pervaded the history curriculum before we had the choice to do otherwise?

The participants' more specific critique of the My Lai massacre unit however, forced me to reflect, at times uncomfortably, on my role in perpetuating a dominant Eurocentric approach to teaching and learning history. Nisha's earlier statement regarding her desire to learn about minority perspectives demonstrates her expectation of multiplicity in the historical narratives she encounters. Nisha sees the inclusion of minority perspectives in historical

narratives as a marker of inclusive and socially just history. During the talanoa the students made it clear that they did not find those minority perspectives in their study of the My Lai massacre, and it is worth revisiting their reflections in detail:

Nisha My Lai, I feel like we don't know anything about what happened to the Vietnamese people after it happened and like how they are dealing with it today or what there is, you know, are there any memorials or anything. I guess that side, maybe the other perspective of the event.

Penelope I feel with that, I feel like it touches base, it goes back to like what we were talking about who writes history? Like we have very limited My Lai perspectives because of how history has been constructed. It's been like whitewashed to a certain extent.

Farah Like Penelope said, and even if the perspectives of the Vietnamese are like talked about, like she said, it was whitewashed so you don't get the true feelings about it because you know how people write it, they are from America so their bias is there. So they could down play a little bit of how they really feel.

Nisha Also, I think just touching on that, there is not enough written by actual Vietnamese people, so even if you were to study it there probably won't be like any resources that you can actually quote or back up your argument with or anything because there is mostly the American side of it.

Penelope and do you think that will go back to like social economic stuff? That it like comes back to that? Like talking about education, like the Vietnamese people are at a disadvantage.

This critique regarding the marginalisation of the Vietnamese perspective in the teaching and learning programme they experienced is a very accurate one. Interestingly, a documentary I usually show to students in this course which includes the perspectives of those Vietnamese impacted by the events at My Lai was not shown to the students in this particular year group. The exclusion of the documentary from our course that year was based on various reasons – the loss of some teaching time in class meant that I had to make a few decisions around how we could reduce the content we needed to work through in order to move to assessment. The practicalities of focusing on specific content which linked to assessment,

coupled with the deeply upsetting nature of the documentary which some students (and at times myself) in previous years had found difficult to watch, led to what I then believed was a relatively easy decision to shelve the documentary in favour of more in class time on other aspects of the unit. The response of students in the talanoa to the lack of a Vietnamese voice in the unit prompted me to reflect on this decision and consider how adapting units of work to fit the practicalities of assessment and the limitations of time can have a tremendous impact on the way histories are framed and taught in our classrooms. By removing that documentary from the teaching and learning programme, I unknowingly contributed to what Penelope termed the "whitewashing" of the history she learnt at school.

The participants involved in the talanoa could clearly identify how a Eurocentric framework had structured the history presented to them in the classroom. They could also provide possible reasons for why this marginalisation might have occurred in the My Lai unit. Those reasons included American bias in the writing of history, a lack of economic resources in Vietnam which has resulted in less history being written and the privileging of written history over oral histories, which further marginalises minority voices. I argue that the lens of marginalisation these students bring with them to the classroom, coupled with their understanding and engagement with the discipline of history, enables them to critique the unit in this manner. By including a study of the My Lai massacre (among other topics) in my teaching and learning programme I believed that I was exposing my students to a range of histories without reproducing the traditional Eurocentric cannon that until recently had dominated history education in New Zealand. In many ways I hoped that I was in fact challenging that dominant cannon. The participants' critique of this unit during the talanoa brought into sharp relief how my own interpretive framework continued to unknowingly shape and influence the history I taught my students. It became clear to me that although the history we were studying took place in Vietnam, my framing of it in the classroom was inherently Western and marginalised the perspectives of the Vietnamese. The students who participated in the talanoa clearly wanted those perspectives to be acknowledged and to find a place in their curriculum.

The lens of marginalisation employed by students is not, however, always straightforward and expected. The participants in this study revealed that when they engage with history through a lens of marginalisation, that lens does not necessarily mean that they will automatically identify or engage with the history we might expect them too. The lens of marginalisation is framed in opposition to what the participants understand to be the dominant or official historical narrative. At times, their own framing of marginalisation can

conflict with topics we might expect to resonate with them, such as the history of New Zealand and the Treaty of Waitangi. Unexpectedly, given their interest in the voices of the marginalised and the inclusion of minority perspectives in historical narratives, participants in the talanoa displayed a lack of interest in, and at times hostility towards, learning about New Zealand's history. It appears that this lack of interest stems from a belief that the history of the Treaty of Waitangi has little relevance to them. Penelope first raises this disconnect with the history of the Treaty stating that "I'm going on what I've always been told, like I can't relate because I am not Māori or Pākehā". Louise picks up on Penelope's point and reiterates it rather more emphatically stating that the Treaty is not relevant to her given that she is not indigenous and has no ties to the land. While, Penelope is quick to jump back in and qualify Louise's declaration by reaffirming the political importance of the Treaty of Waitangi, overwhelming the students in the talanoa agree that, for them, the history of the Treaty feels both removed and unrelated to their own experience of growing up as Pacific youths in New Zealand. This lack of connection with New Zealand's early history appears to be a contradiction of sorts – one would expect that the history of Māori and the colonisation of New Zealand would be fertile ground for participants to explore their lens of marginalisation, however the lens of marginalisation in this context does not mean that the participants automatically identify with Māori as the marginalised or engage with their history. This failure to identify with the early history of New Zealand will be discussed further in the chapter as an act of resistance on the part of the participants, however it is important to note that the participants have constructed their own understanding of marginalisation, and in this context the students understanding of their own place in the national narrative of New Zealand may have had an impact on their engagement with this aspect of our history. I will return to this apparent contradiction later in the chapter when the acts of resistance taken by the participants are discussed.

Acts of compliance in the classroom

While the remainder of this chapter largely focuses on the acts of resistance taken by participants in the study, it is also important to note that the participants made agentic choices throughout the study. This agency was not only exercised as acts of resistance but also through acts of compliance, where the participants made an active decision to engage with a task or history that their lens of marginalisation identified as problematic. These acts of compliance are evident in the decisions of those who identified issues of pedagogical power in the framing of the second activity yet chose to complete the task in order to achieve

success in that task. In doing so, the participants demonstrate their ability to negotiate issues of power and identify a course of action which best fits their end goal. Further acts of compliance were also apparent in the willingness of those involved in the talanoa to engage with the history of the Treaty of Waitangi, despite an underlying desire to disengage from a historical narrative that they perceived as irrelevant to them. The students engaged with the visual sources I provided at the beginning of the talanoa, applying their historical thinking skills to them in an effort to categorise them meaningfully. The lens of marginalisation which shapes the interpretative frameworks of the participants enables them to identify issues of power. As a result of this lens the participants make active decisions regarding their decision whether to resist or comply. In this instance the participants made an active choice to engage with the task and complete the activity. It was only upon further investigation that their true feelings towards the task were discussed and their natural inclination to disengage from this history was revealed. The remainder of the chapter will explore the ways in which the participants exercised their agency through “quietly subversive” acts of resistance.

Acts of resistance in the classroom

Giroux (2003) argues for the development of schools that “could play a productive role in educating students to think critically, take risks and resist dominant forms of oppression as they shape their everyday lives” (p.7). One way teachers can facilitate this development is by encouraging “pockets of resistance” in the classroom (Giroux, 1983b, p.293). The teaching and learning activities used in this study are indicative of the activities that the research participants took part in across all levels of their senior history education at McAuley High School. Participants in this study were therefore largely comfortable with, or had been exposed to, critically interrogating historical sources and narratives, while considering issues of perspective, bias and the dominance of particular historical narratives. The participants in this study were encouraged to be active in the classroom – to make sense of the history presented to them by using the disciplinary tools at their disposal, and to draw their own reasoned conclusions regarding the contested nature of the historical event they were studying. It has already been argued that the participants in this study filter history through a lens of marginalisation and that this lens influences the judgements and conclusions that students draw. When the participants apply this lens to teaching and learning activities that facilitate critical thought, acts of resistance can take place that, in Giroux’s (2003) words, “resist dominant forms of oppression” (p.7).

The acts of resistance taken by participants in this study are not aligned with those traditionally discussed in resistance theory such as “playing dumb”, in which the students resist and sabotage the authority of the teacher, and “getting by” where teacher effort is manipulated so that the student achieves but by doing as little work as possible (Shore, 1992, p.138). The acts of resistance discussed in this chapter are “quietly subversive” by nature and do not always resist the teaching and learning taking place in the classroom. The teaching and learning activities used in the study specifically allowed for “pockets of resistance” to occur within the classroom and the acts of resistance taken by participants were in opposition to the dominant narratives that structured not only the history the participants encountered, but also the social worlds they inhabit. By filtering the history they engage with through a lens of marginalisation, and by employing the discipline of history which enables students to critique, analyse and interrogate historical texts, I argue that the participants recognised the limits of history as it is currently framed in the classroom and as a result perform acts of resistance which endeavour to shift the social justice balance in a way that is meaningful to themselves.

The participants performed acts of resistance against the dominant narratives that structure history and power in the classroom in three distinct ways:

1. Critiquing as an act of resistance
2. Transforming historical knowledge as an act of resistance
3. Disengaging from historical narratives as an act of resistance

These acts of resistance will be explored thematically with reference to the findings of the study. Once the acts of resistance taken by the students have been discussed in detail, the implications of these acts for teaching and learning will be considered.

Critiquing as an act of resistance

I argue in this chapter that the critical reflection of the participants in critiquing both the history curriculum and pedagogical power in the classroom is in itself an act of resistance, even if the students chose not to take an action after the critique has been made. In doing so, I am drawing on the work of Freire (2000), who has heavily influenced Giroux and his work around resistance theory. Freire (2000) notes that “a critical analysis of reality may, however, reveal that a particular form of action is impossible or inappropriate *at the present time*…. [they] cannot be accused of inaction. Critical reflection is also an action” (p.128, emphasis in original). Critical reflection, therefore, is defined by Freire as an action, and I

believe that this understanding parallels Giroux's own advocacy of recognising "quietly subversive" acts of resistance. Therefore, while some the acts of resistance taken by students are highly active and agentic in nature, others take the form of the more quietly subversive critical reflection.

An act of resistance taken by the participants in this study was their verbal and written critique of both the history they encountered in the school curriculum (which took place during the talanoa) and their critique of pedagogical power in the classroom (which took place during the reflective questioning in activity two). Both critiques made by the participants engage with issues of power and identity. There is a clear belief among the students involved in the study that power influences both the actions of historical actors and the writing of history itself. In their critique of the history they learn at school, those issues of power are articulated by the participants as a struggle with the dominant Eurocentric discourse that often structures history and marginalises minority perspectives. This critique is made by participants during the talanoa with particular reference to the My Lai massacre unit. The participants felt that the voices and perspectives of the Vietnamese regarding the event had been marginalised during their study of it. Penelope suggested that this marginalisation was a form of whitewashing history. While the participants spoke with particular reference to the My Lai massacre unit, this critique was also made more generally when discussing the history they had learnt during their time in high school. There was a general consensus among the participants of the talanoa that the privileging of European perspectives had led to a censoring of the history they had been taught. I argue that this discussion, while quietly subversive, is an act of resistance on the part of the participants. Through their critique of the Eurocentric framework that structures their learning the participants attempt to not only resist but also challenge the "dominant forms of oppression as they shape[d] their everyday classroom lives" (Giroux, 2002, p.7). Although during the talanoa I was acting as a researcher and not their history teacher, I had taught many of the participants in the talanoa for at least three years of their senior schooling. When initially making the critique, the students used qualifiers such as "I mean there is nothing wrong with it…" when discussing learning European history, or nervously laughed as they raised key points. This nervousness indicates that the participants are aware that by critiquing the history they have received at school they are also in effect critiquing me as their history teacher. Their willingness to eventually do so, and at times quite forcefully, is an act of resistance against what they perceive to be the dominance of Eurocentric perspectives in the history curriculum. The dominance of the Eurocentric framework is also critiqued further

by Leilani when she questions its framing of history and the marginalisation of oral history traditions in order to fit accepted historical norms. Nisha's statement that "when we learn something I feel like we should touch on the other side as well" is a call to action for teachers and one that I have endeavoured to heed since in the planning of my teaching and learning programmes.

The participants' critique of the pedagogical power of the teacher was facilitated by the reflective questioning that took place at the end of activity two, which asked participants to consider the impact I made as their teacher on their learning. The responses from students demonstrated that while the majority of students are able to identify pedagogical power in the classroom, they sit along a continuum in terms of their willingness to perform acts of resistance in their active critique of pedagogical power itself. As part of the second activity, the participants were given a range of visuals related to the causes of the historical event they were studying in class. The participants were asked to select visuals from the pack and construct an argument that explained why their event occurred. At the conclusion of the activity, the participants were asked to individually consider if they may have been disadvantaged by their teacher choosing the visuals in their pack. Some of the students saw little disadvantage in the teacher selecting the images from which they could choose. For these students, being able to rely on the expert knowledge of the teacher to help ensure that there could be "no wrong answer" was an advantage. They were willing to let the pedagogical power in the classroom rest with the teacher because they believed they benefited from it. These individuals, however, were a minority among the participants, the majority of which demonstrated an awareness of how the actions of the teacher could limit their agency in the classroom. However, while these participants could identify limits to their agency in class, they could also recognise that the pedagogical power of the teacher could both positively and negatively impact their learning. As a result of this recognition, the participants who sat at this point of the continuum do not demonstrate a clear desire to exercise their own agency.

A clearer articulation of agency and desire to resist pedagogical power comes from students who perceive the role of the teacher in the selection of sources as primarily problematic. The participants' critique of the power exerted by the teacher in this situation centres around their belief that through their selection of the pictures the teacher has steered students towards constructing an interpretation of an event that aligns with what the teacher wanted. In Talia's words, the teacher "constructs our learning and decide[s] what we do and don't learn". Talia continues to make the point that the interpretative framework the teacher employed to select

the images she did may not align with those of the students. Some of the participants clearly felt that they lacked agency in the classroom as a result of the teacher selecting the images they used in the activity. Some argued that by selecting the images themselves they would better demonstrate their own framing of the event. Despite working to the confines of the activity and conforming to the limits of the task, these participants took part in the critical reflection of pedagogical power as it was enacted in their classroom. This critical reflection is an act of resistance and representative of their understanding of the role that power plays in this particular classroom environment.

Transforming historical knowledge as an act of resistance

The acts of resistance taken by participants during the study varied in form and nature. Throughout their study of the contested histories explored in the classroom, the participants at times transformed the historical knowledge they encountered in order to rewrite historical narratives from a social justice perspective. These acts of resistance are informed by the lens of marginalisation which influences their interpretative framework. In this way the lens of marginalisation is itself an act of resistance, transforming the knowledge students encounter in class so that the focus is shifted to consider those who are marginalised in the narrative. In both their study of the Mau movement and the My Lai massacre, the participants demonstrated a desire to emphasise specific details they felt had been marginalised in traditional narratives of the historical event or chose to include perspectives on the event that they felt were otherwise neglected. I argue that the participants involved in the study subverted the historical narratives they encountered in the classroom in order to reframe them so that they achieved a social justice purpose. By transforming historical narratives in this way, the participants were also enacting their agency in the classroom in a way that the teacher may never have been able to predict.

While examining the contested narratives of Black Saturday and the Mau movement, the Year 12 students exhibited a clear desire to attribute blame for the violence and deaths that occurred in Apia to Colonel Allen (blame which the students felt had not been attributed thus far in recent accounts of the event written by the Waiouru Army Museum). The participants articulated this desire to tell the truth or share important information regarding who was to blame for the deaths on Black Saturday in both their individual reflections and the historical accounts they constructed of the day themselves:

> In the account I decided to include the fact that Black Saturday turned violent and negative as a result of the implementation of Colonel Allen arresting a wanted person who was marching along with the Mau and supporters on this day. However, I also included Colonel Allen's perspective that the Mau were to blame to make it less biased and speak of two perspectives than just one. (Olivia)

> Colonel Allen was significantly to blame for the deaths of those who died on Black Saturday, as he was in charge and enforced the arrest of a wanted person which cause the outbreak of violence. However Colonel Allen blamed the Mau for the breakout of brutality because he believed it was their fault because they were following orders. (Alicia)

The participants also argue that it is important that people know how many Mau died at Black Saturday. Indeed, for some, communicating to the reader who dies and the impact of those deaths on the Mau, takes precedence when constructing their own narratives of the event:

> I included the number of deaths cause on Black Saturday because it is important for people to know what happened… (Jennifer)

> We included number of deaths as this is important for people to know who and how many people died because they were supporting the Mau. We decide to leave out Colonel Allen's achievements and his background as we wanted to focus specifically on Black Saturday and not over shadow or compliment his actions… (Pania)

> I decided to include information about the number of deaths included in the attached made against the Mau movement to show the impact it made on the future Mau members, especially since their leader Tupua Tamasese Lealofi III was killed amongst the crossfire. (June)

A reoccurring theme found in the narratives of Black Saturday constructed by the students is the search for social justice and a desire to communicate to readers the unjust situation the

Samoans faced. Teresa and Marianna provide clear examples where the actions of the Mau that day are framed within the context of a search for justice, arguing that “I still feel that those persecuted should be given justice” and “[I]t was a day of remembrance of the death of Tupua Tamasese and eleven others due to their stand for justice, for the independence of Samoa”.

For students, the actions of the Mau are underpinned by a search for justice. This search for justice continues to be viewed as motivation for those who later responded to the event. Maria felt that including Helen Clark’s 2002 apology to Samoa in their own historical narrative was important to illustrate that the Mau had been treated unjustly by the New Zealand Administration in Samoa and that it served as a way to bring a sense of justice and closure to the event:

> I believe it was important to talk about the main points on what happened and who were involved, also the statement about Helen Clark apologising is important to Samoans as this is an act of justice and peace.

Maria’s belief that justice could not be served until the New Zealand government apologised significantly shaped the historical narrative she composed. This interest in social justice issues related to Black Saturday is reflected in their own construction of history. The narratives written by the participants demonstrates a keen desire to right a perceived wrong through their historical narratives. In this way the participants become activist historians and active participants in the construction of history. They demonstrate an awareness of the constructed nature of history and an ability to emphasise certain ideas and points of view over others. Where participants are given the opportunity to act, or make decisions in the classroom, they almost always (explicitly or implicitly) chose to do so in ways that reflect a desire for social justice outcomes. This desire for social justice, and the decision to enact it through the construction of their own historical narratives, aligns with an interpretive framework that perceives history as a power struggle that results in the marginalisation of some groups.

As previously discussed in chapter seven, the power relations at play in the My Lai massacre unit are viewed in multiple ways by the participants. Lt William Calley is at times perceived as marginalised and vulnerable himself, while in their critique of the unit during the talanoa, participants raised key issues around the marginalisation of Vietnamese perspectives in the unit as a whole. When it came to constructing their own narratives of the My Lai massacre, the participants took a decidedly social justice approach, arguing that the

My Lai massacre was not an isolated event. In order to do this, the participants drew on the differing perspectives they had encountered during the study. By arguing that the My Lai massacre was not isolated the participants are explicitly rejecting the official narratives of the event supported by President Nixon, the United States Government and Armed Forces. The participants frame their argument that My Lai was not isolated as a social justice action. Rosa explained that she "decided to include that the My Lai massacre was not an isolated event because other people higher up in the military were involved but shifted the blame onto Calley". When explaining what she decided to include in her own account of the My Lai massacre, Teuila states "[t]hat it was not an isolated event… because they attempted to cover it, who knows what other 'minor' events were covered up?". Salome and Elisapeta are perhaps most explicit in articulating the purpose they hoped their historical narrative would serve when they state at its conclusion "[o]verall, we believe that the My Lai massacre was not an isolated event because it is something worth bringing up to the public, and trying to fight for justice for the innocent". In order to achieve this justice Elisapeta states that they left out "some of Calley and Nixon's points… because the majority of the perspective did not match what I thought the event was – which was not isolated".

While Elisapeta and Salome talk about fighting for "justice for the innocent" it is not explicit who the "innocent" are, although looked at in the wider context of their work it appears that the participants are referring to the Vietnamese victims here. However, in the course of declaring My Lai a commonplace event the participants are also in part exonerating Calley to an extent and acknowledging his marginalised place within United States military hierarchy. In framing My Lai as an event that was not isolated in its nature, the motivations of the participants are not always explicit but a clear theme throughout the data has emerged whereby Calley is not held primarily responsible for what happened that day at My Lai. When coupled with a desire among the participants to privilege Ridenhour's perspective and his search for justice, the narratives constructed by the participants in this study indicate that they take a social justice approach. The transformation of this history into a social justice narrative that aims to redress issues of power and marginalisation identified by the participants is an act of resistance.

Through critique and transformation of knowledge the participants are performing "quietly subversive" acts of resistance. Giroux (1983b) argues that "if we view these acts as practices involving a conscious or semiconscious political response to school-constructed relations of domination, then these students are resisting school ideology in a manner that gives them the power to reject the system on a level that will not make them powerless to

protest it in the future" (p.288). The participants involved in this study resist what they perceive as the dominant ideology shaping their history education and utilise their agency to resist it in ways that ensure they will still be able to protest it in the future. This approach to resistance is typified by the response of Hollyanna, a participant of this study and now the inaugural Pacific History Scholar at the University of Auckland, and her desire to contribute to the decolonisation of Pacific histories:

> One of the main things I learnt during Stage One Pacific History was the need for people to decolonise indigenous histories and to un-silence the histories oppressed by Western narratives. As Pasifika, this stood as a powerful reminder of the long and enduring journeys our ancestors took to create a better future… [m]y journey with history has only just begun and I am very excited about the endless opportunities to learn more about the world, its cultures, and its people. (Aniea, 2018, p.14)

Disengaging from historical narratives as an act of resistance

The lens of marginalisation through which the participants' filter history was particularly evident in their discussion of New Zealand history, in particular Māori-Pākehā history of the 19th century. Although this lens of marginalisation often prompted the students to identify missing narratives or issues of power in the history they encountered, the participants failed to engage with Māori history during the talanoa. Further discussion around the topic revealed that the participants had little interest in the topic and could not see how New Zealand's early history was relevant to them. While this disconnect appears to contradict the concept of a lens of marginalisation, I argue that this ambivalence towards New Zealand's history, and disengagement from Māori-Pākehā history in particular, is an act of resistance against the dominant national narrative. I argue that this disconnect is inherently linked to the national narrative and the contested place of Pacific peoples within it. The formation of the Polynesian Panther movement in the early 1970s and the Dawn Raids of Pacific Island migrants which came soon after, are topics that have proven to be extremely popular with the students of McAuley High School. While discussing their ambivalence towards New Zealand history I asked the participants if they enjoyed studying the Dawn Raids, making the point to them that "that was New Zealand history". Penelope quickly responded, "I think like, most of us could relate to it probably because, like the Polynesian aspect". Penelope's comment here indicates that where the participants could see themselves in the New Zealand history they studied, they engaged, but that they also don't necessarily see the history of the Dawn Raids as New Zealand's history per se. It is *their* history and it was

powerful. The transformative nature of this history is articulated clearly by Hollyanna who is now studying Pacific history at university:

> The decision to study history at university began in high school where I was first exposed to the histories of Pacific peoples. The Polynesian Panther movement and the Mau movement of Samoa were highlights of my secondary education for it not only 'taught history' but rather cultivated a sense of cultural pride, identity, and empowerment. (Ainea, 2018, p.14)

While studying the Dawn Raids and formation of the Polynesian Panthers is transformative, it does not necessarily locate the students within New Zealand's national narrative. Although the topic appears to be growing in popularity amongst teachers, if comments on the New Zealand *History Teachers New Zealand* Facebook page can give an indication, it has only been possible to teach it since prescribed content was removed from the history curriculum at Level 1 in 2011. This history has traditionally been silenced in the national narrative, and it occupies a contested position as it contradicts the myth of peaceful and harmonious race relations that to this day underpins the New Zealand's national identity. While learning about the Dawn Raids and the formation of the Polynesian Panther movement might explain the history and social context of Pacific migration to New Zealand, it does not necessarily provide Pacific learners with a sense of belonging to Aotearoa because it is a history embroiled with racism, and reminders that they have always occupied a contested space here. The participants' lack of engagement with New Zealand history can therefore be perceived as an act of resistance against a history they feel is not relevant to them. Disengaging with New Zealand history in this way, however, limits the participants' opportunities to engage with histories of marginalisation that, if framed appropriately, could provide Pacific learners with some sense of belonging or place in the national narrative.

Summary

I set out to investigate the interpretative frameworks of Pacific learners in order to understand how they saw history as constructed and contested. I found that the participants in this study filtered the history they encountered in the classroom through a lens of marginalisation. I argue that the lens of marginalisation alone is not necessarily emancipatory. However, when coupled with the disciplinary knowledge the participants gain from studying history, student understanding can translate into acts of resistance that have the goal of transformation. The discipline of history gives participants access to a range of

tools they can work with in order to articulate this lens, including the ability to critique historical knowledge, recognise contestation, question validity of sources, and argue for the need for multiple perspectives. The participants in this study employ the discipline of history to articulate a lens of marginalisation and, at times, transform the knowledge they encounter in class to fit a social justice purpose.

The discipline of history, and use of a critical pedagogy approach, has also empowered the participants to recognise the limits of history education as it is currently framed in the classroom. Shore (1992) argues that:

> [i]n a curriculum that encourages student questioning the teacher avoids a unilateral transfer of knowledge, she or he helps students develop their intellectual and emotional powers to examine their learning in school, their everyday experience and the conditions in society. Empowered students make meaning and action from reflection, instead of memorising facts and values handed to them (p.12).

The pedagogy employed during the study promoted the active participation of students in the critical interrogation of historical texts. I argue there is a relationship between the historical understandings fostered by the pedagogy used during the study and the participants' ability to critique the contexts in which the learning took place. During the talanoa the curriculum delivered in class (how it was framed, the perspectives it included and excluded and the historical concepts it employed) became a text interrogated by participants. Their critical interrogation of the history they were taught led them to articulate a lens of marginalisation which provides an insight into the interpretative framework of the students involved. I argue that it is the discipline of history that, when coupled with the lens of marginalisation, offers the participants the opportunity to be agentic. That agency can be seen in both the acts of resistance and compliance that the students chose to take in the classroom.

Chapter Ten: A Way Forward

> *Studying the historic relationships between Pacific nations and the wider world was crucial in creating a space that encouraged conversation and cultural understanding. This continued in university where I pursued my studies in Pacific History… one of the main things I learnt during Stage One Pacific History saw the need for people to decolonise indigenous histories and to un-silence the histories oppressed by Western narratives. (Ainea, 2018, p.14)*

Introduction

Hollyanna's experience of learning history, articulated in her statement above, speaks to the transformative power of history as a discipline and its capacity to empower students in both a meaningful and culturally sustaining way. Hollyanna is a former student of McAuley High School, participant in this study and, most recently, the inaugural recipient of the Hugh Laracy Pacific History Memorial Prize at the University of Auckland (awarded in 2018). She cites learning about uniquely Pacific contexts, such as the formation of the Polynesian Panther movement and the Samoan Mau movement, as both transformational and empowering. Learning these histories at secondary school led Hollyanna to pursue history at a tertiary level where she continues to critically interrogate the histories presented to her by her lecturers, identifying the need to "decolonise indigenous histories and to un-silence the histories oppressed by Western narratives" (Aniea, 2018, p.14). Hollyanna's activism is not limited to her study of history. Her desire for social justice extends to politics where Hollyanna has contributed to the founding of LabourNesia, a political group associated with the left leaning Labour party which aims to make politics more accessible for Pacific youth. Hollyanna embodies the qualities of the ideal school leaver - an ability to think critically, a desire for social justice, and empowered with a sense of purpose that begets activism. She is an example of a highly achieving Pacific learner in history education. Better still, Hollyanna is not an anomaly among her peers at McAuley High School, where many of the students she studied alongside also achieved rates of academic success significantly above the national standard.

This study set out to explore the interpretative framework of female, predominantly Pacific learners through an examination of how they understood history as constructed and contested. The engagement of Pacific learners with the discipline of history is a significantly

under researched area of knowledge. This neglect continues despite a persistent history of Pacific learners being underserved and disadvantaged by the New Zealand education system. Salesa (2018) has discussed the funnelling of Pacific learners into subjects and NZQA standards that are perceived as less challenging and the impact that this has on the rates of Pacific learners achieving university entrance qualifications at Level 3 of the New Zealand Qualifications Authority assessment framework. This trend is reflected in statistics which show that the number of students taking History as a subject in decile 1 schools, which are predominantly populated by Pacific and Māori learners, is significantly less than those at decile 10 schools. 18.2 percent of students enrolled in history nationally in 2018 were from decile 10 secondary schools, while only 3.8 percent of history students hailed from decile 1 (Education Counts, 2019). Hollyanna's positive experience of learning history at school is not necessarily reflective of the wider experience of many Pacific learners. However, it could be. I argue that the insights provided by the participants in this study suggest that Pacific learners engage with history through an interpretative framework that is substantially different to the frameworks employed by their teachers to frame the history they encounter in the classroom. I also contend that the Pacific learners in this study were empowered to make agentic choices in the classroom as a result of the lens of marginalisation coupled with the discipline of history underpinned by a critical pedagogy approach. The final chapter of this thesis will outline the key literature and theoretical framework which underpins this thesis. It will draw together the different threads of understanding articulated by the participants regarding their understanding of contested history to highlight three key findings and presents a conceptual framework in diagrammatic form that provides a way forward for educators of marginalised students. This chapter will conclude with a discussion of the implications of the research and provide recommendations for both teacher practice and education policy.

The importance of understanding the relationship between identity and historical understanding

This thesis is underpinned by a critical theory framework which recognises the socially constructed nature of knowledge and the unequal power relations which underpin that construction. The literature, as outlined in chapter three, establishes that identity significantly influences the ways in which students engage with history in the classroom. The role of identity in making sense of history is particularly pertinent in the New Zealand context given its colonial and imperial history, which has directly influenced and shaped both the national

narrative and the default national history curriculum. In chapter two I argue that the framework which structures the teaching and learning of history in New Zealand has traditionally privileged knowledge that emanates from the metropole, resulting in a focus on a traditional cannon of topics which often results in "silencing Southern voices and marginalising Southern experiences" (Epstein and Morrell, 2012, p.471).

A critical sociocultural approach to history education and research has also highlighted the importance of sociocultural factors, particularly race and ethnicity, in framing student engagement with the history they encounter in the classroom. At present, investigations into the ways in which Pacific learners in the New Zealand context engage with and understand history are limited. Reymer (2012a, 2012b) has written most extensively on this topic, however Pacific learners often feature as a footnote in the study of the historical understanding of other groups (Harcourt et al, 2017). This study adds to existing knowledge of the ways in which Pacific learners and other marginalised groups engage with historical knowledge in the New Zealand context, through an investigation of the participants' understanding of history as constructed and contested. Using contested histories as a vehicle for the investigation of student understanding of history aligns with a critical pedagogy approach to teaching and learning. This approach offered participants the opportunity to interrogate historical texts and evaluate multiple interpretations of an event, providing an insight into the ways the participants make sense of history. Resistance theory also provided a theoretical framework that allowed me to make sense of the participants responses to the historical knowledge and teacher pedagogy they engaged with throughout the study.

The participants engaged with history through a lens of marginalisation

A significant finding of this research is that the participants in the study filter the historical knowledge they encounter in the classroom through a lens of marginalisation. This lens is shaped by the identity participants bring with them to the classroom and it underpins their historical thinking, especially their engagement with the historical concept of bias and the construction of historical narratives. The lens of marginalisation also influences the history that the participants perceive as being relevant to them (this particular finding will be discussed in further detail later in this chapter).

The lens of marginalisation results in the privileging of perspectives the participant perceives as being marginalised and shapes the decisions that participants make about the validity of historical sources. This study also found that the lens of marginalisation was a primary driver in the participants' desire to learn about multiple perspectives on a historical event, and that the lens is underpinned by a strong awareness of the roles that power plays in both historiography and history itself. The distrust of those in power exhibited by participants in the study, and a willingness to identify with the perceived underdog, offers an insight into the participants' understanding of power and how it relates to their own position in New Zealand society. This understanding is further reinforced by the participants' antagonism towards the New Zealand government and the Eurocentric narratives they feel dominate their history education. The lens of marginalisation which filters the participants' engagement with history challenged the framework employed by the teacher during the study to structure the participants learning, and required the teacher to reflect on their own interpretative framework and how it structures the learning which takes place in the classroom. The participants transformed historical knowledge, elevating the narratives of the marginalised and critiquing and reframing historical knowledge and curriculum. The pedagogies used in the study empowered the students to perform these critiques. The lens of marginalisation, coupled with the agency of the participants, took transformation in a different direction than anticipated. When employed by the participants, the lens of marginalisation transformed their own knowledge and understanding which led to agentic acts not bound by the rules of school or wider society. In this way, transformation occurred on an individual, rather than a societal, level.

The lens of marginalisation results in "quietly subversive" acts of resistance

A second major finding of the research is that the lens of marginalisation employed by participants works in tandem with the participants' disciplinary knowledge of history, empowering the participants to make agentic choices which include performing acts of resistance in the classroom. Where the participants chose not to engage in acts of resistance, I argue that they still make an agentic decision to comply with my requests as their teacher. The research found that the acts of resistance taken by participants in the study are "quietly subversive", at times subverting the history presented in class to construct social justice narratives that elevates the voices of the marginalised. The participants

achieve this goal of subversion by both transforming historical knowledge for a social justice purpose and critiquing the history curriculum and pedagogical power. The participants also participate in acts of resistance through their rejection (both explicit and implicit) of the existing Eurocentrism that structures much of the New Zealand history curriculum and by disengaging from particular historical narratives. I argue that these acts of resistance are examples of the participants enacting the emancipatory goals of critical pedagogy through the critical interrogation of texts and transformation of knowledge. The emancipatory nature of this approach to teaching history is articulated by Hollyanna and her desire to "decolonise history" and radically transform the way in which the history of her people is written (Aniea, 2018, p.14).

The participants engage with historical content in nuanced and complex ways

The final significant finding of this research is that the participants engage with historical knowledge in nuanced and complex ways. The study found that the historical contexts that empower and engage the participants were those which they could relate to in some way. Participants of the study frequently cite learning about the Dawn Raids and Polynesian Panther movement on the 1970s and the Samoan Mau movement as transformative, however the ways in which the participants related to varied historical knowledge is nuanced. Recommending that Pacific learners should predominantly learn the history of the Pacific, or history that which only directly relates to their cultural group is too simplistic and limiting. Participants in this study were able to find relevance in, and engage with, the study of topics as varied as the Reformation and the My Lai massacre. I argue that not only is accessing history in which the participants can see themselves is empowering and transformative, but that providing opportunities for students to engage with marginalised narratives and histories which have a social justice focus, are also powerful ways to develop the historical thinking of marginalised students. Histories with a social justice focus can provide opportunities for teachers to broaden the interpretative frameworks of their students so that they can engage with a variety of histories and make connections across contexts. This variety enhances their understanding of their own history and locates it in a wider context.

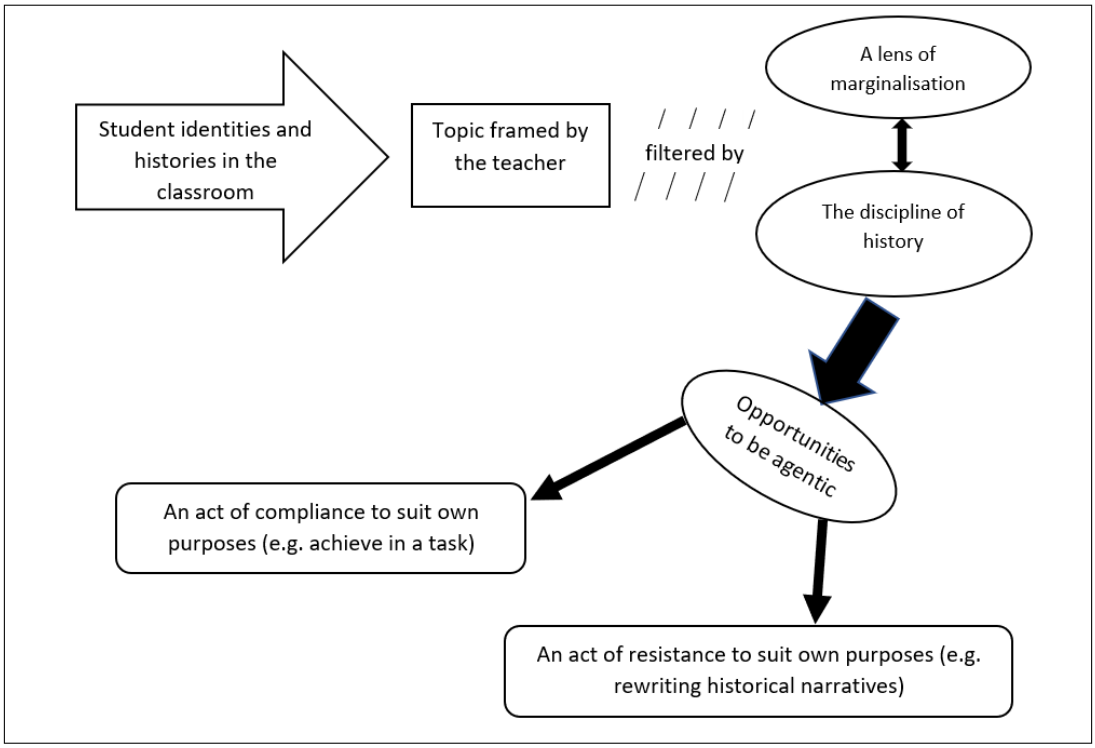
Despite the participants' affinity with the marginalised, the lens of marginalisation which filters the participants' understanding of historical knowledge did not necessarily mean that the participants easily or willingly identified with New Zealand history. The hostility

demonstrated by the participants towards New Zealand history belies a belief that New Zealand's national narrative has little relevance to them. This attitude highlights that the lens of marginalisation employed by participants is underpinned by their own understanding of what it means to be marginalised. That the participants did not readily engage with New Zealand's colonial history perhaps is reflective of their own fractured sense of belonging in New Zealand and a failure to see themselves reflected in the national narrative. Indeed, the transformative histories that the participants identified with during their studies, the Dawn Raids and the Mau movement, are histories of Pacific peoples resisting the racist policies of the New Zealand government. The participants in this study expressed this fractured sense of belonging by disengaging from a history that they believe has failed to engage with them.

A conceptual framework for moving forward

The discussion chapter is brought together in the following diagrammatic form which provides a conceptual framework for moving forward with the teaching of history to marginalised student groups. This study has resulted in the development of an original conceptual diagram that explains the pedagogical relationship between the participants and the historical knowledge presented to them by their teacher, and the choices that they make in class as a result of that relationship. The conceptual diagram which follows outlines how the lens of marginalisation, through which the participants filter historical knowledge, coupled with the discipline of history, provides the participants with opportunities to be agentic in the classroom.

Figure 1: *The lens of marginalisation*



I argue that the participants in this study brought different aspects of their identity and history with them to the classroom. The participants' experience of learning was then mediated by my framing of the historical knowledge explored in class. This framing was dominated by my perspective and the learning outcomes I had in mind when planning the unit of work. I argue that while I framed a topic to elicit a particular outcome in the classroom, the participants filtered the historical knowledge they encountered in the classroom through a lens of marginalisation that privileges the experiences and perspectives of marginalised groups, as determined by the participants' own experiences and understandings. This lens of marginalisation is employed by students in conjunction with the discipline of history which provides opportunities, through the critical interrogation of historical texts, for pockets of resistance to occur. The disciplinary power of history, coupled with the lens of marginalisation which the participants brought to the classroom, offers students the opportunity to be agentic. That agency manifests itself both in acts of resistance and acts of compliance. The agency exhibited by the participants in this study challenges dominant stereotypes of Pacific learners as passive or disruptive.

The conceptual framework provides a model for the findings of the thesis and acts as a helpful tool for teachers seeking to understand the choices made by marginalised students in

their history classrooms. By providing a clearer understanding of the ways in which Pacific learners engage with historical knowledge, the conceptual diagram offers teachers, and those who train them, the opportunity to reflect on their current practice and identify where opportunities exist for Pacific learners to be agentic in the classroom. The research offers insight into the ways in which history education can be transformative and encourage high levels of educational success for Pacific learners.

Implications and recommendations

The findings of this study shed light on the interpretative framework of the participants and speak to wider issues regarding the place of Pacific learners within New Zealand society. They also challenge many of the deficit based pedagogical practices and assumptions that structure the teaching and learning of Pacific learners. The implications of this study connect to the principals of social justice which underpin critical pedagogy and resistance theory, which seek to emancipate and empower marginalised groups through pedagogical practice that is truly transformative.

The analysis of the data argues that participants in this study filter historical knowledge through a lens of marginalisation which, when combined with the disciplinary skills of history, enables the participants to interrogate historical texts to reveal marginalised narratives and underlying power structures (according to their own interpretative frameworks). Furthermore, as a result of this lens the participants in this study demonstrate agentic behaviours in the classroom and perform acts of resistance, critiquing both the curriculum and pedagogical power, transforming historical knowledge to serve their own notions of social justice, and disengaging from historical narratives they perceive as irrelevant to them. The findings of this study challenge the stereotypes of Pacific learners as either passive or recklessly disruptive. The acts of resistance and compliance taken by the participants in the study were purposely done and demonstrated the agency of the students involved.

The findings of this study also challenge the use of pedagogy that focuses on keeping priority students busy or limits their agency in the classroom. The literature review established that many teachers have low expectations of Pacific learners in the classroom based on their ethnic identity, and that these low expectations influence the pedagogical choices made by teachers of Pacific learners, often resulting in “less challenging” teaching and learning activities being offered to those students (Turner et al, 2015, p.65). When the participants in this study applied their lens of marginalisation to the content studied in class

in tandem with the disciplinary skills they developed studying history, they were able to draw sophisticated conclusions about the power relationships that they believed underpinned the historical contexts they engaged with in class. As a result, this study has significant implications for teacher practice. It offers an opportunity to provide evidence-based workshops, delivered through national and regional associations, that draw on the model developed in this research to facilitate professional learning which promotes empowering teaching and learning strategies for Pacific learners in the Social Sciences. The study could inform teacher planning and assessment practice, providing a critical pedagogy framework which empowers teachers and school leaders to consider how dominant narratives or Western assumptions frame units of work and assessment practice for marginalised students. These considerations could also be used at national level to inform the development of new curriculum and assessment frameworks.

This research offers a new way of understanding the Pacific learner in the history classroom and makes three key recommendations related to the effective teaching and learning of Pacific learners in the New Zealand history classroom. The first recommendation is that a critical pedagogy approach, which requires students to interrogate texts and challenge existing narratives, should be consistently employed by teachers of history in New Zealand classrooms. This approach provides opportunities for “pockets of resistance” to exist in the classroom and empowers the students to critique knowledge and transform it for emancipatory means, resulting in the effective engagement of Pacific learners in the discipline of history.

A second recommendation is that classroom teachers should apply the lens of critical pedagogy to their own interpretative frameworks to consider how they shape the history students will encounter in their classroom and to consider whose stories they tell (or fail to tell) through their teaching and learning programmes. I encourage classroom teachers to identify points of access that can make the histories studied in their classrooms relevant to a range of learners. Where Pacific learners are concerned, classroom teachers and leaders of curriculum in schools should prioritise the inclusion of multiple perspectives and a range of narratives in teaching and learning programmes in order to decentre a Western narrative and approach. Key to decentring a Eurocentric approach is the reframing of New Zealand history to provide Pacific learners with a place in the national narrative and enable students to make connections with the history of New Zealand.

A third recommendation relates to the recent announcement that New Zealand history will become compulsory from 2022 in all New Zealand classrooms. The research found that the lens of marginalisation employed by participants in the study did not necessarily mean that the participants identified with New Zealand history and the history of Māori and colonisation. This thesis argues that the lens of marginalisation employed by the students is complex and shaped by their own nuanced identity. The identities expressed by the participants were often localised to their school, social and South Auckland community groups, but could also stretch back "home" to the Pacific Islands, even if the participants themselves were New Zealand born. This complex and fluid identity did not often allow space for the inclusion of a collective national identity or sense of "New Zealand-ness". The participants' rejection of New Zealand history during the talanoa speaks to wider issues of disenfranchisement and a fractured sense of belonging among Pacific learners in New Zealand society. This aversion towards New Zealand history from Pacific learners should be concerning for all history educators. For New Zealand history to be taught in a manner that is both engaging and transformative, it is necessary that further research is conducted which explores Pacific learners (alongside other marginalised students) and their sense of identity in the New Zealand context. We must consider how that identity shapes their engagement specifically with New Zealand and Māori history and the implications this has for our practice as teachers. Further research, alongside the provision of effective professional learning, that can contribute to an understanding of how New Zealand's history can be taught effectively in a multicultural environment is essential if that that history is to be made accessible to all students. It is crucial that we develop a clear understanding of pedagogies that can hook marginalised students into engaging with New Zealand's history and seeing themselves and their identities reflected in it. This thesis argues that the use of critical pedagogy would be an effective approach to work towards this goal.

Recommendations for further research

This thesis makes a valuable contribution to the field of educational research, adding to the limited research that currently exists concerning Pacific learners and their understanding of, and engagement with, historical knowledge. The study sheds light on the interpretive frameworks of Pacific learners and offers an insight into the ways in which teachers can effectively engage with Pacific learners in the classroom through the development of a unique conceptual framework for understanding the interpretative frameworks of marginalised students. However, this study also highlights the limited research that currently

exists regarding Pacific learners and their understanding of history. The findings of this research are a result of a very specific case study, conducted with female students in a low decile, faith-based secondary school. The Mercy charism of the school (which focuses on service and care of the poor and vulnerable) may have influenced the student focus on social justice and could have shaped their desire to look for marginalised voices in historical narratives. Conducting a similar study with Pacific learners in a co-educational, secular school may see different results and would be a welcome contribution to this area of research. Further research could also consider the inclusion of other subject areas and disciplines in order to explore if the lens of marginalisation identified in this study extends across curriculum areas in order to develop a broader understanding of how identity impacts the teaching and learning of Pacific learners.

Conclusion and final reflection

This thesis challenges negative stereotypes of the Pacific learners and the deficit theorising that often relegates them to busy work and subjects that offer limited opportunities to engage in truly transformative thinking. The participants in this study refuse to conform to those stereotypes and instead demonstrate that as predominantly Pacific learners they are critically engaged and agentic in the classroom. I argue that the participants of this study engage with history through a lens of marginalisation. That lens was shaped by the ethnic identity and sociocultural factors that the participants brought with them to the classroom. By employing a lens of marginalisation, and through the vehicle of contested histories, the participants identified complex issues of power in historiography, historical contexts and teacher pedagogy. Furthermore, the participants in this study were agentic in the classroom and performed a range of acts of resistance in response to those perceived issues of power. These acts were purposeful and quietly subversive, performed with social justice goals in mind. This research also recognises that the interpretative framework employed by the participants in this study differed to the interpretative framework of the teacher. As a result, in my role as the teacher I was often surprised by the different ways in which the participants engaged, or disengaged, with the history that I had framed for them.

This thesis contends that the discipline of history has the potential to be emancipatory for students from minority groups and that it can provide them with the tools needed to ‘decolonise’ their own history and effect transformative change. I argue that teachers can facilitate this transformative process in their classrooms; however, this requires teachers to be vulnerable, willing to let go of control and open to critiquing their own practice and the

assumptions which underpin it. The findings of this thesis implore teachers to critically evaluate how they frame the history they teach and the stories they choose to tell in the classroom and consider the ways in which their interpretive frameworks may differ to those of their students. It encourages teachers to view the history curriculum and their own teaching and learning programmes as constructed, and to afford students the agency and space within the classroom environment to not only critique the historical sources they are presented with, but also the curriculum itself. When combined with a critical pedagogy approach to teaching and learning, this critique of our own practice enables teachers to identify opportunities for pockets of resistance to occur in our classrooms. There is a social justice imperative to ensure our practice enables this resistance to occur. In doing so we can begin to move away from teaching students a history curriculum that is knowingly or unknowingly "whitewashed", towards an inclusive history education that offers Pacific learners the opportunity to engage with a transformative history curriculum that promotes equitable outcomes. We have a moral obligation to ensure this occurs.

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Appendix A: Participant Information Sheet (Participant)

Project title: Student understanding of history as contested.

Dear students,

This year I am conducting research for my PhD with my supervisor, Dr Carol Mutch. I want to study my year 12 and 13 History classes, to find out how you develop an understanding of history concepts. You will be asked to take part in an activity in-class where you will analyse different accounts of an historical event and construct your own interpretation. This will help me to understand how you engage with historical sources.

Project description and invitation: All students in my Year 12 and 13 history classes will be invited to take part in the project. If you do not wish to take part in the project alternative work will be provided for you during that lesson which you can complete in the breakout space.

Project procedures: You will be asked to take part in an in-class activity on two occasions during the year. Your participation in the project in class will be video recorded and will take approximately 2 hours. You will work in pairs on some history activities and will report your reflections to the rest of the class.

You **may** then be selected for a follow up interview based on your responses during the in class activity. The same activity will be repeated in Term 3 (2015). All work produced by you during the lesson will also be collected by me for my research.

Participant rights: Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. Your choice to participate or not in the project will not reflect on your relationship with me as your teacher, or the school, and will not have any impact on your internal or external assessment results. The activities you are asked to take part in will not be assessed and are usual in class tasks. If you do not wish to participate in the study or do not wish to be videoed, alternative work will be provided for you which can be completed in the breakout space.

If you participate in the full study, you have the right to withdraw from the project up to one week after the final follow up interview. A copy of the edited transcript can be made available to you upon request. Every attempt will be made to protect your identity and that of the school.

Data care and use: While data is being gathered for the project, they will be stored securely. The only people who will have access to the material before it is published will be

me and my supervisor. The findings might be used to contribute to academic presentations and publications.

Contact details: If you have any about the study please feel free to contact:

Name: Bronwyn Houliston **Email:** bwri009@auckland.ac.nz

My supervisor is Assoc. Prof Carol Mutch: c.mutch@auckland.ac.nz **Work phone:** 09 623 8899 Ext 48257

The Chair of the University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee can be contacted with respect to any ethical concerns at:

Office of the Vice Chancellor, The University of Auckland, Private Bag 92019, Auckland, 1142. Ph: 09 373-7599 Ext 83711 Email: ro-ethics@auckland.ac.nz

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE ON 30 JUNE 2015 FOR 3 YEARS. REFERENCE NUMBER: 014008

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Appendix B: Participant Information Sheet (Principal/Board Chair)

Dear Anne and Joanne

This year I am conducting research as part of my PhD, under the supervision of Dr Carol Mutch, with my Year 12 and 13 History classes, to find out how secondary school students develop an understanding of history as contested. This research will investigate the role of teaching and learning strategies and national assessment in the development of student understanding of history as contested. Students will be asked to analyse contrasting accounts of an historical event and construct their own interpretation of the event in order to understand how they engage with historical reasoning and make sense of multiple historical perspectives.

Project title: Student understanding of history as contested.

Project description and invitation: The aim of the project is to draw conclusions regarding the development of student understanding of history as contested, and build a picture of how understanding progresses as students move through their secondary schooling in New Zealand. Students will be provided with the opportunity to engage in the process of historical reasoning and multiple perspectives in the classroom, and to develop the ability to differentiate between simple historical stories and more complex and problematic histories.

All students in my Year 12 and 13 history classes will be invited to take part in the project. Alternative work will be provided for that lesson if a student does not wish to take part in the project. They will be able to complete this work in the breakout space.

Project procedures: Students will be asked to take part in an in-class activity on two occasions during the year. Participants in the project will be video recorded. The in-class activity will take approximately two hours. They will: (1) Read three accounts of an historical event in pairs; (2) Discuss in pairs using worksheet prompts; (3) Construct their own written historical account; (4) Discuss in pairs the reflective prompts provided and record their responses briefly on paper; (5) Report back orally their reflections to the rest of the class.

Students **may** then be selected for a follow up interview based on their responses during the in class activity. This follow up interview will be audio-recorded. The same activity will be repeated in Term 3 (2015). Approximately 10 students per class will be selected for follow up interviews.

After the in class activities and follow up interviews take place, student discussions and follow up interviews will be transcribed for analysis. All work produced by students within the lesson will also be collected by the Researcher for analysis. The Researcher will analyse the transcripts and in class activities for: (a) evidence that suggests how students gain an understanding of history as contested; (b) evidence that suggests how student understanding develops as students move from Year 12 to Year 13; (c) information regarding the impact of a student's individual circumstances (e.g. socio-economic, ethnic) on their understanding of history as contested; (d) evidence regarding the impact of teaching and learning strategies on the development of nuanced understandings of history as contested among Year 12 and Year 13 students.

Participant rights: Student participation in this study is entirely voluntary. Student choice to participate or not in the project will not reflect on their relationship with the teacher or the school, and will not have any impact on their internal or external assessment results. The activities students are asked to take part in will not be assessed and are usual in class tasks experienced by students of history. If on any particular day students do not wish to participate in the study or do not wish to be videoed, they will be provided with alternative work to complete in a breakout space at the back of the classroom.

Students have the right to withdraw from the project up to one week after the final follow up interview has been completed. After data analysis has begun, this will become more difficult but we will listen to and respect everyone's point of view and aim to negotiate a satisfactory outcome for all parties. A copy of the edited transcript can be made available to participants upon request. Every attempt will be made to protect the identity of the school and participants, however anonymity cannot be guaranteed.

Data care and use: While data is being gathered for the project, they will be stored electronically on a pass-worded external hard drive and/or locked in a secure drawer. It will remain this way for six years until paper data are shredded and electronic data are wiped from the external hard drive. The only people who will have access to the material before it is published will be the researcher and her research team. The transcripts will be analysed to contribute to the international study and findings will be shared through academic presentations and publications.

Contact details: If you have any about the study please feel free to contact:

Name: Bronwyn Houliston **Email:** bwri009@auckland.ac.nz

My supervisor is Assoc. Prof Carol Mutch: c.mutch@auckland.ac.nz **Work phone:** 09 623 8899 Ext 48257

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Appendix C: Participant Information Sheet (Parents/caregivers)

Dear Parent/caregiver,

Project title: Student understanding of history as contested.

Superviso: Associate Professor Carol Mutch

My name is Bronwyn Houliston and I am your daughter's history teacher at McAuley High School. This year I am conducting research as part of my PhD under the supervision of Dr Carol Mutch. I want to study my Year 12 and 13 History classes, to find out how secondary school students develop an understanding of how they make sense of history.

Project description and invitation: The aim of the project is to draw conclusions regarding how your daughter develops an understanding of history as contested, and build a picture of how her understanding progresses as she moves through her secondary schooling in New Zealand.

All students in my Year 12 and 13 history classes are invited to take part in the project. Alternative work will be provided for that lesson if your daughter does not wish to take part in the project. She will be able to complete this work in the breakout space at the back of the classroom.

Project procedures: Your daughter will be asked to take part in an in-class activity on two occasions during the year. Your daughter will be video recorded during class time and the activity will take approximately two hours. Your daughter will work in pairs on historical sources and report back orally their reflections to the rest of the class.

You daughter **may** then be selected for a follow up interview based on their responses during the in class activity. This follow up interview will be audio-recorded. The same activity will be repeated in Term 3 (2015). Approximately 10 students per class will be selected for follow up interviews.

After the in class activities and follow up interviews take place, student discussions and follow up interviews will be transcribed for analysis. All work produced by students within the lesson will also be collected by myself for analysis. I will analyse the transcripts and in class activities for: (a) evidence that suggests how students gain an understanding of history as contested; (b) evidence that suggests how student understanding develops as students move from Year 12 to Year 13; (c) information regarding the impact of a student's individual

circumstances (e.g. socio-economic, ethnic) on their understanding of history as contested; (d) evidence regarding the impact of teaching and learning strategies on the development of nuanced understandings of history as contested among Year 12 and Year 13 students.

Participant rights: Your daughter's participation in this study is entirely voluntary. Her choice to participate or not in the project will not reflect on her relationship with myself as her teacher or the school, and will not have any impact on her internal or external assessment results. The activities she is asked to take part in will not be assessed and are usual in class tasks experienced by students of history. If on any particular day your daughter does not wish to participate in the study or be videoed, she will be provided with alternative work to complete in a breakout space at the back of the classroom.

Your daughter has the right to withdraw from the project up to one week after the final follow up interview has been completed. After data analysis has begun, this will become more difficult but we will listen to and respect everyone's point of view and aim to negotiate a satisfactory outcome for all parties. A copy of the edited transcript can be made available to participants upon request. Every attempt will be made to protect the identity of the school and participants, however anonymity cannot be guaranteed.

Data care and use: While data is being gathered for the project, they will be stored electronically on a pass-worded external hard drive and/or locked in a secure drawer. It will remain this way for six years until paper data are shredded and electronic data are wiped from the external hard drive. The only people who will have access to the material before it is published will be me and supervisors. The transcripts will be analysed to contribute to academic presentations and publications.

Contact details: If you have any about the study please feel free to contact:

Name: Bronwyn Houliston **Email:** bwri009@auckland.ac.nz

My supervisor is Assoc. Prof Carol Mutch: c.mutch@auckland.ac.nz **Work phone:** 09 623 8899 Ext 48257

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Appendix D: Consent Form (Participant)

THIS FORM WILL BE RETAINED SECURELY FOR A PERIOD OF SIX YEARS

Project Title: Student understanding of history as contested

Supervisor: Associate Professor Carol Mutch

Name of Researcher: Bronwyn Houliston

I have read the Participant Information Sheet. I have understood the nature of the research and why I have been invited to participate. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have them answered to my satisfaction.

- I agree that I will participate in this research
- I understand that I am free to participate in this research and that my choice to participate or not will not impact my relationship with my teacher or the school or my assessment results.
- I understand that participants will be video recorded and it will take approximately two hours
- I understand that some students will be selected to take part in follow up interviews based on their responses during the in class activities and that these interviews will be audio taped.
- I understand that I can withdraw my participation and information without giving a reason at any time during the study and up to one week after final follow up interviews are completed.
- I understand that if I choose to withdraw from the project alternative arrangements will be made for me during that lesson.
- I understand that all effort will be made to protect my identity, such as using pseudonyms, however the researcher cannot guarantee total anonymity, as some readers may guess the description of the school and the participants.

- I understand that the findings of this study will be used in academic publications or presentations.
- I understand that the original recordings, transcripts and consent forms will only be viewed by the researcher and her supervisor and will be kept for six years, after which they will be destroyed.

Name: _____

Signature:_____ **Date**: _____

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Appendix E: Consent Form (Principal/Board Chair)

THIS FORM WILL BE RETAINED SECURELY FOR A PERIOD OF SIX YEARS

Project Title: Student understanding of history as contested

Supervisor: Associate Professor Carol Mutch

Name of Researcher: Bronwyn Houliston

I have read the Participant Information Sheet. I have understood the nature of the research and why students from my school have been invited to participate. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have them answered to my satisfaction.

- I agree that students from my school may participate in this research
- I give my assurance that students are free to participate in this research and that their choice to participate or not will not impact their relationship with their teacher or the school or their assessment results.
- I understand that participants will be video recorded and it will take approximately two hours
- I understand that some students will be selected to take part in follow up interviews based on their responses during the in class activities and that these interviews will be audio taped.
- I understand that students can withdraw their participation and information without giving a reason at any time during the study and up to one week after final follow up interviews are completed.
- I understand that if students choose to withdraw from the project alternative arrangements will be made for that student during that lesson.
- I understand that all effort will be made to protect student identity, such as using pseudonyms, however the researcher cannot guarantee total anonymity, as some readers may guess the description of the school and the participants.

- I understand that the findings of this study will be used in academic publications or presentations.
- I understand that the original recordings, transcripts and consent forms will only be viewed by the researcher and her supervisor and will be kept for six years, after which they will be destroyed.

Name: _____

Signature:_____ **Date**: _____

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Appendix F: Consent Form (Parent/Caregiver)

THIS FORM WILL BE RETAINED SECURELY FOR A PERIOD OF SIX YEARS

Project Title: Student understanding of history as contested

Supervisor: Associate Professor Carol Mutch

Name of Researcher: Bronwyn Houliston

I have read the Participant Information Sheet given to my daughter. I have understood the nature of the research and why my daughter has been invited to participate. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have them answered to my satisfaction.

- I agree that my daughter can participate in this research
- I understand that my daughter is free to participate in this research and that their choice to participate or not will not impact on their relationship with their teacher or the school or their assessment results.
- I understand that participants will be video recorded during class time and it will take approximately two hours
- I understand that some students will be selected to take part in follow up interviews based on their responses during the in class activities and that these interviews will be audio taped.
- I understand that my daughter can withdraw their participation and information without giving a reason at any time during the study and up to one week after final follow up interviews are completed.
- I understand that if my daughter chooses to withdraw from the project alternative work will be provided for that lesson.
- I understand that all effort will be made to protect my daughter's identity, such as using pseudonyms, however the researcher cannot guarantee total anonymity, as some readers may guess the description of the school and the participant

- s.
- I understand that the findings of this study will be used in academic publications or presentations.
- I understand that the original recordings, transcripts and consent forms will only be viewed by the researcher and her supervisor and will be kept for six years, after which they will be destroyed.

Name: _____

Relationship to child: _____

Signature:_____ **Date**: _____

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Appendix G: Sample Unstructured open-ended interview questions

Project title: Student understanding of history as contested

Name of Researcher: Bronwyn Houliston

Sample unstructured open-ended interview questions (to be adapted according to the student's curriculum level and topic studied)

1. How did you feel reading the different accounts of Black Saturday/My Lai Massacre?
2. Were you surprised by the different accounts you read? Why/why not?
3. How did your understanding of the event change as you studied the three accounts?
4. How did you did you decide what to include and exclude from your historical accounts?
5. Do you feel that your own account of the event was accurate? Why/why not?
6. Why do you think there are often different perspectives on an historical event?
7. What happens when you are confronted with conflict in the stories you are told?
8. What happens when something you think is a fact is challenged in the classroom?
9. Can you think of an example where something you believed was a fact was challenged by a different perspective? How did you deal with this?
10. Do you think it is important to study and understand different perspectives on an event in history? Why/why not?
11. Why do you think some perspectives are left out of some historical accounts?
12. How believable/trustworthy are historians?

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE ON 30 JUNE 2015 FOR 3 YEARS. REFERENCE NUMBER: 014008

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